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THE WONDERLAND OF BIG GAME

From a painting by the Author

Elephants by moonlight: Kenya

Frontispiece]

THE WONDERLAND OF BIG GAME

BEING AN ACCOUNT OF TWO TRIPS THROUGH TANGANYIKA AND KENYA

BY

MAJOR A. RADCLYFFE DUGMORE, F.R.G.S.

AUTHOR OF "CAMERA ADVENTURES IN THE AFRICAN WILDS" "THE ROMANCE OF THE BEAVER," "THE ROMANCE OF THE CARIBOU" "THE VAST SUDAN," ETC.

WITH 8 MONOCHROME REPRODUCTIONS OF PAINTINGS BY THE AUTHOR, 52 PHOTOGRAPHS, AND A MAP

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35°
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The Wonderland of Big Game

CHAPTER I

TANGANYIKA AND THE JOURNEY TO THE GREAT CRATER OF NGORA NGORA

TO anyone who has once tasted of the joys of Africa the call to return grows stronger as each year passes. Probably no other country possesses so great a charm. The glorious sunshine, the delicious coolness of the nights in the higher parts, the varied scenery of bold mountains, of golden plains, of luxuriant forests, of lakes and rivers, and, perhaps most wonderful of all, the abundance of wild animals, combine together to give to the country a fascination which is irresistible to those who love the great out-doors.

Is it to be wondered at that I hailed with joy an opportunity to re-visit East Africa, since I might once more revel in its beauty and freedom, and enjoy the excitement and interest of the bloodless hunting of wild creatures? For with me cameras take the place of fire-arms, with the result that I derive pleasure undreamed of by those who shoot. Not only pleasure, but

the thrills of the chase are intensified greatly, and, in addition, there is delight to be had from watching animals and birds in their natural state, living their lives in the country which is their birthright. For camera-hunting means endless watching, and this results in seeing much that is missed when shooting is the main object.

All the pleasure of stalking, which after all is the chief attraction of shooting big game, is part of the camera man's work, but to a far greater degree, and much more skill is required. Not only must he approach within closer range, but he must carry and handle a cumbersome camera instead of a handy rifle, he must consider the light, the composition, the position of the animals, and, most important and difficult, he must be clear of intervening branches and grass, or the picture will be spoilt.

Some may say it is not really a sport, but why? What is there that the conventionally termed "sportsman" does that is not done to an even greater degree by the camera hunter? If the question of danger is considered, the man armed with a camera runs far greater risk, for he has no means of protection, and, further, he must approach even the most dangerous beasts within absurdly close range. It is a wonderful sport, clean, wholesome and with the advantage that the results give interest and delight to many thousands of people who, though they enjoy seeing and learning about wild animals, do not have the

opportunity of going to the countries where they may be seen in their wild state.

It was in January of 1921 that I found myself once again in Nairobi. Not the Nairobi of 1908 as I had first seen it, but a fine town, modern in its conveniences, its streets filled with motor-cars, with policemen on point duty, where but twelve years ago such things were not even thought of. But this is not a story of towns, so we must pass along from the scenes of man's activity and go into the quiet of the wilds.

While plans were being made for a visit to Tanganyika (ex-German East Africa) a short trip was made, at the invitation of Sir Northrup McMillan, to Donya Sabuk, a mountain some thirty miles from Nairobi, in the hope of securing cinema film of buffalo which, thanks to being carefully protected, were numerous in the dense forests of this beautiful mountain. Unfortunately, the habits of these fine beasts are such that photographing them is not as a rule easy. During the daytime they usually stay in the dark forests, where the denseness and lack of light are against camera work. Late in the afternoon they come out to feed, stay out in the open throughout the night and until the morning sun dries the heavy dew off the high grass. By nine o'clock they usually return to the seclusion of the forest. This is more or less the rule in most parts of the country where buffalo are found, but there are places where they may be seen feeding in the open or resting under scattered shade trees during the day,

as they used generally to do before the great rinderpest epidemic swept over the land towards the end of the last century. This dread disease nearly exterminated the buffalo, and the few that survived became almost entirely nocturnal in their habits, keeping in the thick cover of papyrus or forest from sunrise to sunset. From observations during the past few years it seems as though they are gradually reverting to their former habits.

In the hope of finding the buffalo in the open it was decided to make a very early start, and so, long before daylight, in the company of several others, I began the ascent of the mountain. It was a stiff climb, and a severe test of muscles and wind, as we made our way up the north-west shoulder of the mountain. Darkness slowly gave way to dawn; the sky changed from its deep mysterious blue as the distant horizon lightened before the rising sun. Far away, mountains, beyond the Tana River, took shape and became rich purple in colour. Brighter and still brighter grew the cloudless sky till the sun appeared; strange long blue shadows streamed across the undulating hills until lost in the mist which lay in the valleys. To the north, nearly seventy miles away, the sharp peaks of Kenya glistened in their covering of snow, separated from the lower land by a girdle of mist. The chill of night gave way before the rising sun, which bathed the mountain in a golden glow; while, far below, the Athi Plains were still in shadow. With the increasing light it was necessary to keep a sharp look-out, as the buffalo might

be lying down in the high grass, and there was danger of coming on them suddenly, a thing to be avoided, for no one can say what they will do if startled.

With me and my camera bearers there was a native tracker and a friend, and we were well ahead of the rest of the party, when, on coming over a high ridge, a herd of some twenty buffalo were seen making their way down the slope on the opposite side of the valley or glade; below them, a few hundred yards away, there was a small water-hole not far from a large clump of trees. It was evident that the animals were heading towards this water-hole, and it was equally evident that it would be difficult for us to get there before they reached it. However, the only chance for securing pictures was to make directly for the trees, which would afford cover, and with luck it might be possible to obtain a good view of the water-hole and perhaps make the photographs from that shelter. As buffalo have remarkably good eyesight, it was obvious that a wide detour must be made so that we could keep in cover. Unfortunately, the roughness of the ground made walking very difficult. The coarse grass, which resembles oats, was shoulder high, and hidden in this were loose stones and large boulders, so that it was almost impossible to avoid tripping when going as fast as was then necessary. Stumbling over the concealed stones, drenched with the dew which hung in glittering drops from the grass, entangled frequently in trailing vines, I made my way,

followed closely by the camera bearers. It was a race against time. What had looked like a short walk of perhaps five hundred yards proved to be nearer a thousand, and what had looked like easy going proved to be appallingly rough. A stream had to be crossed and the dense fringe of bushes tangled up with wire-like vines had to be cut, and yet no noise must be made.

At last the clump of trees was scarcely a hundred yards away. Behind it, completely hidden from view, was the water-hole; but where were the buffalo? We stood still and listened, but there was no sound to break the quiet of the mountain glade. Then, leaving the natives and my friend with the cameras, I made my way through the tall, matted grass. Yard by yard the distance was covered, until at length I reached the edge of the trees where the grass was short. For a few minutes I stopped to listen, and to wipe the grass seeds from my moist face. There was no sound save the singing of birds in the trees. Through the dense vegetation were innumerable well-trodden paths, and along one of these I moved slowly forward, as I wanted to see if the buffalo were near the water-hole on the other side. Scarcely had I gone a dozen yards when the stillness of the morning was broken by an appalling crash among the bushes, as though a thousand buffalo were coming. There was not a moment to waste. I must get back to the men and to my friend, who had a rifle. Regardless of the noise that was unavoidable, I rushed through the grass and reached the men just as the buffalo came

out of the trees at the farther end of the clump. There was only one tree near where the men had stopped, and it was instantly occupied by the frightened natives and my friend. For a moment the mighty creatures stopped as though not certain which way to go, whether to attack or escape to safety. It was a critical moment, but discretion won the day, and after a few vigorous and very unpleasant snorts they made off through the thick grass and over the scattered stones with as much ease as though running over a well-kept field. Of course, it was a most disappointing end to the attempt, but it might have been far worse. If only I had succeeded in getting into the belt of trees perhaps ten minutes sooner all would have been different. Under the shadow of the dense foliage the buffalo could have been photographed as they approached. There was every reason to believe that had they not been suspicious they would have stayed at the water-hole to drink and wallow; but presumably the wind, which in the early morning is usually shifty, had carried our scent to the wary creatures. If their suspicions are aroused they will invariably make for cover without delay.

During the rest of the morning we tried unsuccessfully to approach the buffalo on other parts of the mountain, but without success, at least in the matter of photographing them. Several times, when creeping quietly along the animals' paths through the forest, we came upon groups of buffalo, but it was

always in places where the camera could not be used owing to the lack of light, the denseness of the underbrush, or the fact that the animals saw us before we saw them.

Few animals are more difficult of approach than buffalo; their constant vigilance, their exceptional keenness of scent, sight and hearing, combined with their extraordinary invisibility when in forest country, are so much in their favour that to photograph them by stalking requires a marked degree of skill, courage and good luck. There is something unpleasant about the work, for undoubtedly no animal is more to be feared, and though it is unusual for them to attack when in herds, there have been exceptions to this rule, and no one wants to risk these exceptions.

It is difficult to believe that such large animals would be hard to see, and they offer a strong argument against the theory of the protective colouring and markings of the larger beasts. We are told by those who believe in this theory that the leopard is spotted so that it may not be seen in the flickering light and shade of the forest; but the buffalo, like the elephant, has no pattern, yet the plain tones of varying shades of grey, running almost to black in the case of the buffalo, render the animals quite as invisible as the spotted coat of the leopard. If an elephant stands absolutely still, as it will do when suspicious of danger, it is almost impossible to see, notwithstanding its enormous bulk. The light and shade on the skin appear to merge into

the surroundings in a way that is difficult to believe. Even the tusks look like dead branches, provided they are not moved. The same is true of the buffalo, whose dark bodies seem merely shadows in the gloom of the forest; without moving a muscle, they will remain like statues and watch for the suspected intruder, who may easily approach to within a few yards before realising the proximity of the great beast. If there happen to be a cow with a young calf or a solitary bull there is every possibility of an attack; but if there is a large herd the chances are they will make off as fast as possible; as quietly as ghosts if they believe themselves unobserved, otherwise with a total disregard for noise, crashing through the brush like a tornado.

The buffalo hunt on Donya Sabuk proved a complete failure as to the photographic results; but an opportunity to make a film of a rhino just missed realisation owing to the unfortunate fact that one of the party carried a rifle. He had never seen a rhino before, and consequently did not understand the ways of these strange beasts. It occurred soon after the experience with the buffalo at the beginning of the day's work. Several of the party were gathered together near the water-hole, holding a post-mortem discussion as to the cause of the failure, when two rhino were seen coming down the hill-side in a state of nervous excitement. Evidently they had scented man, but had been unable to establish the enemy's whereabouts, so according to their usual habit they were rushing about wildly,

snorting loudly and generally making themselves ridiculously conspicuous. Nothing in the animal world can look more foolish than these queer prehistoric monsters. To the uninitiated they inspire fear, but to those who are familiar with their peculiarities they are usually a source of amusement. Now it happened that the member of the party who had the rifle and did not understand rhino had lagged behind, and was now approaching the water-hole. Suddenly he caught sight of the snorting rhino a hundred yards or more away, and of course imagined himself to be in great danger, since he failed to realise that the wretched beasts could not see him, their range of vision being probably not over fifty or sixty yards. I was assembling the camera as quickly as possible in the hope of being able to make a film of the animals. Not for a moment did it occur to me that anyone would dream of doing any shooting, for Sir Northrup was most anxious to preserve the few rhino that still remained on Donya Sabuk. To my surprise, however, two shots in rapid succession rent the air, and to my intense disgust one of the poor old rhino came tumbling down the rough hill-side stone dead. There was nothing to be said. The wretched man imagined that he had saved himself from a horrible death, instead of which there had been not the slightest necessity for ever firing a shot.

Towards afternoon we returned, tired and empty-handed, and the following day went back to Nairobi to complete

arrangements for the journey to Tanganyika, with the great crater of Ngora Ngora as the objective.

It was only by the courtesy of Sir Horace Byatt, Governor of the mandated territory, that permission had been given for the trip, as the country was not yet opened to sportsmen. From Nairobi the train took us to Voi, a wretched, feverish, superheated place seventeen hundred feet above sea-level, and about a hundred miles from Mombasa. There we embarked on the train for Moshi, which was about ninety miles to the west, and a short distance beyond the Kenya border.

The Voi-Moshi Railway was built for military purposes, and was not intended for ordinary passenger traffic; however, it served the purpose of our party, who were more interested in reaching their destination than in the comforts which could so easily be dispensed with. The country west from Voi proved to be rather uninteresting, dry, generally flat or rolling, and with very little game; beyond a few Grant's gazelle, hartebeest and ostrich not much was seen. On nearing Moshi the appearance of the country changed completely; the dry plains gave place to wooded hills and water-courses, which came from the slopes of Kilimanjaro. Moshi was reached after eleven hours of rather shaky travelling, and we made ourselves as comfortable as conditions would allow in the only hotel in the place. Its name, Hotel Afrika, made the days of German occupation seem very recent.

Around Moshi both buffalo and elephant were numerous, but the conditions were far from satisfactory for photographic work. The chief attraction of the place was the superb view of that mighty mountain Kilimanjaro, the highest point of Africa, rising about twenty thousand feet above sea-level. Unfortunately, its snow-capped summit was hidden most of the time by clouds; only in the early morning and late evening did it condescend to show itself in its glory. Dense forests clothe the slopes, and these forests are the home of great numbers of elephant, who quickly understand that this is, for them, a vast sanctuary, in which they may roam about free from the fear of the deadly rifle.

Among the herds which frequent these forests there is, or was, one patriarch, known as the Crown Prince; how he acquired the name history does not relate, perhaps because of the elusiveness which was one of the peculiarities of his namesake during the Great War. Be that as it may, the elephant Crown Prince had the reputation for owning the greatest tusks ever dreamed of by ivory hunters. So large and heavy were the tusks said to be that they would frequently drag on the ground and leave curious furrowed tracks. Many people had hunted in vain for this monster of Kilimanjaro. He was a very wise old chap, and he too, in some mysterious way, had learned that shooting in the mountain reserve was not allowed. Occasionally he would come out to raid some well-grown plantation, but these raids

were seldom repeated in the same locality or in quick succession, tactics which were very disconcerting to his would-be executioners.

Among the many men who coveted the great ivory was a certain soldier, who thought that the value of that ivory would make a welcome addition to his army pay. Of course, this may not have been his chief reason, but then again it may. He visited the home of the much-sought-after creature and studied very carefully the peculiarities of the spoor, until he believed he knew every mark and irregularity of the huge feet. This, of course, was in the reserve. One day a tracker brought him word that the big elephant had come down from the safety of the mountain forest and was among the native shambas. The soldier, greatly excited, lost no time in getting started, fully armed with his battery of rifles. In a few hours he came to the place where the native had seen the elephant, and there, sure enough, was the spoor, fresh and well-defined. With bated breath the soldier followed in the direction taken by the quarry. The great tracks led through cultivated land, where considerable damage had been done to the crops, on into a belt of forest, where they appeared so fresh that it was felt that at any moment the maker of them might come into view.

The crackling of some dry branches suddenly attracted the soldier's attention; looking up, he saw with delight the grey mass of an elephant scarcely thirty yards away. Owing to the

thickness of the bush the outline of the animal was confused and the tusks could not be distinguished, but a vital shot was offered and the soldier took careful aim and fired. To his delight the great beast fell. At the same moment there was a terrific crashing of bushes and trees as the Crown Prince himself thundered away. He did not stand on the order of his going, but went, and it would be hours before he would stop. It had been a close call; he had probably been watching the approaching sportsman and may have actually seen the shot fired, so why should he wait to argue with the deadly rifle? The wretched soldier discovered to his disgust that he had shot a small bull with ivory scarcely of legal size, and his licence was exhausted for the rest of the year. But the Crown Prince still lived, and may even now be roaming the great forests of Kilimanjaro.

From Moshi to Arusha, the next stopping-place, was a distance of fifty miles, over a sort of a road which was in the process of construction. The journey was made in a Ford car, and the poor car was sorely tested, for there were no less than twenty rivers to cross; some had bridges, some had none, and it was a great question which were the worse. The rivers were in some cases so deep that it was a serious question whether the car could be taken through, while the bridges, being only temporary affairs and very narrow, were dangerously rickety; however, the car did its work nobly, and landed me and my outfit of cameras safely at Arusha seven hours after

"Above Arusha rises the little brother of Kilimanjaro, the beautiful mountain of Meru"

starting. The rest of the party were to follow a few days later.

Arusha is one of the most beautiful and healthy places in Tanganyika. The land is well cultivated and very rich, producing some of the finest of coffee. Unfortunately, everything had been sadly neglected during and since the war, but under improved conditions it is destined to be an important place. As was usual in all the German settlements, the fort and barracks were the feature of the post; they were well designed and substantially built, though, to the British idea, rather out of place.

Above Arusha, which stands at an elevation of about five thousand feet, rises the little brother of Kilimanjaro, the beautiful mountain of Meru, about fifteen thousand feet above sea-level, its slopes covered with luxuriant forest, its summit sometimes carpeted with snow.

At Arusha it was necessary to make arrangements for porters in order to carry on the trip to the crater, which was about one hundred miles farther west. Thanks to the courtesy of Major Browne and the other officials, orders were sent out to the neighbouring chiefs for the hundred and fifty porters that would be required. Everything had to be done through the Government officials, for, as already stated, the country was not yet opened up to sportsmen, and there was no safari outfitter such as Nairobi boasted. I was received with the greatest kindness by

the residents, who put me up and made me as comfortable as possible during the few days of my stay, so that the time passed quickly and pleasantly while I was getting everything in readiness to start. In a few days porters began to come in response to the order that had been sent out. They were rather a fine-looking lot, tall, cleanly built and of a deep copper colour. They belonged to the Warusha and Wameru tribes, whose homes were on the slopes of Meru, where they cultivate small plots of land, growing no more than is necessary for their own use. Like nearly all the African people, they give little thought for the rainy day, but live easily and without worry about the future. The effect of German influence was noticeable in the attitude of respect which these people showed to the white man. They would always stand and usually salute in a dignified way, which was very different from the habits of the natives in Kenya. Whether their outward demonstration of respect has value it is difficult to say, but somehow one could not help thinking that it is better than the slackness which is met with in Nairobi, for example, since the war. Yet perhaps the British method of extreme fair play and friendliness may in the end prove of greater and more enduring value. Time alone will tell.

Major Browne, the District Political Officer, and the other officials did everything in their power to help me in making the preliminary part of the arrangements which was my only share of the management on the trip to the Great Crater, and

in a few days, when the rest of the party arrived, all was in readiness for the start on February 14th. The outfit included two Fords, two mules and the one hundred and fifty porters, with headman, cook and personal boys. The Fords were to be used for the first part of the journey, which could be done by road, after which they would be sent back to await our return.

As it is usually best to make a short march to begin with, in order that the men, who are unused to the porter's work, can adjust their loads, the first camp was made only a few miles from Arusha. Water was to be the chief difficulty throughout the greater part of the journey, and the first sample was certainly not very promising. The water—we will call it water, for lack of a better name—was collected from a shallow pool trampled badly by cattle and about as filthy as any water could be. Unfortunately, at this first camp I began to feel ill, for the first time in all the trips I had made; the night at Voi had given the fever-carrying mosquitoes their opportunity, and this was the beginning of a very serious attack of fever, which almost completely spoilt the trip and reduced the camera work to an almost negligible quantity.

The second day out saw the end of motoring. Rain fell in torrents, and the roads became so slippery that even the Fords were vanquished, and had to be left behind to await better conditions before they could be taken back to Arusha. For nearly sixty miles the road led through more or less level country,

grass covered for the greater part and with scattered thorn trees and belts of forest along the water-courses. Game was not very abundant. Giraffe, hartebeest, zebra and ostrich were seen. The fifth day, between Mkayuni and Myunyu, saw the end of road travel, and we then headed almost due north along native trails, through thick grass, open forests of thorn trees, over rocky ridges and open country. The very rough, sun-baked soil made the walking difficult, and I found the heat extremely trying, as my temperature was up to 104 degrees.

Game became increasingly plentiful as we proceeded, great herds of eland roaming like cattle over the grass lands. Giraffe gazed at the long snake-like line of men as though wondering what strange animal was invading their country. It was probably very beautiful, but feverish eyes see little beauty in anything. My one desire was to lie down and drink endless ice-cold lemonade, a desire that could not, of course, be realised.

The second night after leaving the road camp was made not far from Lake Manyara, in the vicinity of a Masai village. These people are the great cattle owners throughout most of the suitable country in Kenya and Tanganyika, and are by far the richest of the tribes. It is a curious fact that they seldom make their villages near water. Milk is their food, and little else is used. They will not, as a rule, eat the meat of any wild creature, though they do occasionally have feasts of beef and

are said to be very partial to fresh, warm blood, drawn from the living animal by means of a reed inserted in a blood vessel. The villages are filthy to a degree that it is impossible to describe; usually they consist of a circle of very low wattle huts plastered with cow-dung, windowless, but far from odourless and full of flies. Around each group of huts a thorn bush fence is erected enclosing from one to several acres of trampled dung, and at night a closely-packed mass of cattle. Bairnsfather's delightful description of a farm in France or Flanders "with a rectangular smell in the middle" fits the Masai village, except that the smell is not confined to the middle. The men of the tribe do no work except what is necessary for the care of their cattle. They stand about in picturesque groups leaning on their spears, draped in red blanket or brown cotton cloth, their hair finely braided and filled with red earth and grease. Interesting to see, but it is doubtful whether they will ever condescend to do manual labour; certainly not for some time to come.

Many of the Masai, both men and women, to say nothing of naked children with fly-covered eyes, came to the camp to pay their respects to the white man and to satisfy their curiosity. Great gourds, long, narrow and bedecked with shells and filled with milk, were brought as presents. Owing to their peculiar habits connected with milking and with cleansing (?) the gourds, the white man tactfully avoids partaking of the curdled, fly-infested milk, preferring that boon to travellers the good old

"tin cow." The curious way, so common among African tribes, of sitting in front of the white man's tent is particularly noticeable among the Masai. The lot that visited the Manyara camp were no exception to the rule. They sat and sat and still sat, and spat at regular intervals, while the different members of our party, ignoring the visitors, went about their various occupations. Baths, even in the filthy barn-yard smelling water, were more or less necessary after the long, hot march. Meals were eaten, and all the time the Masai squatted about round the camp, saying little, and what little they did say was not understood by us. After some difficulty, the head-man made the village chief understand that the party would be glad to take a guide who knew the best way to reach the Great Crater, and after much discussion two fine-looking fellows offered their services and promised to be ready the following morning.

The nine hours' march from the Masai village was chiefly along the shores of Lake Manyara, which on this east side are flat, partly grassy and partly of bare black soil, more or less encrusted with a grey soda-like substance, hard and rough and reflecting the heat to a painful degree. The lake is about three thousand feet above sea-level. There was little game to be seen, and, strangely enough, birds were scarce, though the lake is, as a rule, covered with flamingos and other aquatic species.

Owing to the intense heat a long rest was made at lunch

time under a mighty baobab tree in order to allow the stragglers to catch up with the main party. While searching for firewood one of the men came across two bustard's eggs, the colour of which was a pale dull blue with brown splotches. It was the first time I had ever seen the eggs of this bird, and was surprised to learn that they had been found on the ground with no nest. Whether the nest was in the vicinity I do not know.

As it was necessary to reach a suitable camping ground where water could be obtained, the lake being salty and therefore unfit for use, the march was resumed about two o'clock. The trail led along the shore of the lake, a strong-smelling, sun-baked mud flat, scorchingly hot, for there was not a breath of wind to afford relief. The foreshore was covered with strange, irregular masses of grey cement-like substance, presumably volcanic. On breaking open one of these it was found to have a core of hard stone of the appearance of flint. In the distance, to the north and north-west, was the great escarpment rising above the lake, two thousand feet or more in height, heavily forested and with deep ravines cutting into its slopes. To the north could be seen the lofty summits of several volcanic mountains, from seven thousand to over eleven thousand feet in height, from whose crests rolled continual clouds of vapour, for these volcanoes are still active to a greater or lesser degree. To the east, undulating plains continued as far as the eye could penetrate the blue heat haze, with the seven-thousand-foot

peak of Esimingor rising abruptly from the plains fifteen miles away.

It was all very wonderful, but the need of water was more compelling, and every member of the party was moving forward as fast as possible, a straggling line, all attracted by the sight and sound of a thousand-foot cascade which, like a stream of glittering silver, shone alluringly from the top to the bottom of one of the deep ravines. It seemed but a few minutes' walk to this unlimited supply of water, but it was nearly two hours before it was reached, and then it was not the cascade itself, which was still a few miles distant, but a beautiful stream of cold, clear water which had its source in the high mountains and flowed through a forest of welcome shade. It rejoiced in a name that sounded like Tathyiani. Loads were dropped without ceremony as the thirsty porters rushed into the cool water and drank till they could drink no more; and, being nearly mad with the raging fever, I threw precaution to the winds and bathed and drank my fill, not having the strength of mind to wait till the water had been boiled. It may have been rash, but the thirst of fever is difficult to control. My tongue, hard and dry as sandpaper, lips cracking from the heat, internal and external, craved to a point of madness the temporary relief afforded by the limpid water.

As the neighbourhood of the stream was unhealthy for the mules, owing to the prevalence of tsetse fly, the animals

were sent on ahead without loss of time to a safer place up the side of the escarpment, while we made camp under the shade of great trees near the stream, as beautiful a spot as could be found anywhere. With the coming of evening myriads of birds broke into song to the accompaniment of the sound of falling water among the trees. Those who imagine that the birds of the tropics have no song should visit the forests of Tanganyika and Kenya, where they will hear bird music as beautiful as in any place in the world, and under conditions that cannot be surpassed. Following the vesper hymn of the birds came the hush of the tropical night, and the great silence which is always wonderful. The occasional cry of some wandering hyena or the bark of a jackal and the distant roar of the lion were the only sounds, and even these added to the enchantment of the night.

Almost before the first glow of dawn the camp was astir, and soon after the sun had risen the trail up the steep escarpment was filled with slowly-moving men. It was almost like climbing the side of a wall; for the laden porters each step was an effort. But the country was so beautiful, the morning air so clear and cool, that the difficulties were almost forgotten, especially by those of the party who had never before travelled through an African forest. Camp was made early in the day in a small clearing on the slopes of the escarpment by the bank of a small stream (probably Ooldjoto) of crystal clear water, which danced

over the rocks under the shade of great forest trees. It was difficult to find sites for the tents, as the ground was strewn with jagged rocks and level places did not exist; but eventually everything was arranged, and the rest of the day was devoted to resting and washing. The stream was found to be alive with small crabs, almost three inches in length and bright orange in colour. No sooner was a white hand or foot put into the water than from near and far these crabs came to investigate the strange sight. There was keen competition among them to get near to the white flesh, and the competition usually ended in a fight which was quite amusing to watch.

The position of the camp afforded a wonderful view of the great Rift Valley. In the foreground was the primeval forest, many of the great trees smothered in flowers and covered with strange parasitic plants; to the south lay Lake Manyara like a gigantic mirror; to the north the summits of Loolmalassin and other mountains, which formed the west wall of the Rift. Below were vast rolling plains of brilliant yellow grass with scattered thorn trees; and far away above the purple haze to the east rose Meru, its peak faintly visible. A more beautiful panorama would be difficult to find, and it was all typically African. After the heat of the past week and the flat, dry country this forest-covered mountain with the cool, scented air was a welcome change. But, beautiful as this camp was, there was even better to be seen, for the next two days were through a veritable fairyland of forest,

" A veritable fairyland of forest ; of streams hastening down the mountain."

dark, luxuriant and deliciously cool and damp; of glades covered with rich grass and an endless profusion of brightly-coloured flowers; of streams hastening down the mountain to lose themselves in the scorching plains below; and from everywhere about these wonder glades, in the clumps of flower-bearing trees, and on the edges of the forest, came the songs of many birds, songs as beautiful as any that are heard in northern countries. The bell-like notes of the bell-bird, clear notes of other unknown and unseen singers, the soft cooing of doves—nothing could have been more perfect nor more unlike the usual conception of Africa.

CHAPTER II

THE GREAT CRATER OF NGORA NGORA

AN old crater, nearly six thousand feet above sea-level, afforded a perfect place for one of the camps; the floor was almost level, grass-covered and with a small pool of reasonably good water. Around the crater, which had the appearance of having been a lake about four or five hundred yards across, there was a narrow belt of slightly higher ground, carpeted with tall grass and many flowers but almost entirely treeless, surrounding which was the great forest of limitless extent. Game, as might be expected, was very scarce; a few tracks of bush buck, buffalo and rhino were seen, but no animals. Most of the smaller African game prefer the open plains or sparsely-timbered country to forests, either because it is more healthy or because they feel safer from their enemies. Bird life, however, was fairly abundant, and in the early morning and late afternoon the chorus of songs was very beautiful, and gave a charm to the country that cannot be expressed in mere words.

On the morning of the third day after leaving Lake Manyara the last of the great forest was passed, and the safari entered a vast tract of rolling land covered with rich green grass and a

" To the west Lake Magadi glistened like silver in the midday sun "

profusion of flowers, as surprising as it was varied : snow-white anemones nearly two feet in height, delphinium, both blue and white, red gladioli, forget-me-nots, lilies, and many others too numerous to mention. On the northern side of this vast rolling plain stood the great volcanic mountains Ololmoti, Olossriwa and Loolmalassin, with their summits lost in the clouds ; while to the south, thirty miles away, Oldeani reared its head to more than ten thousand feet above the level of the sea. We believed that the Great Crater had been reached, but in this we were mistaken. Camp was made late in the afternoon at an elevation of seven thousand eight hundred feet. Game, strangely enough, was scarce. A few eland, some hartebeest, what were believed to be Grant's gazelle, and three rhino were seen. Some Masai came to visit the camp, and told the head-man that it was still nearly a day's march in a north-westerly direction to Ngora Ngora. In a way this was disappointing news, but what we had believed to be the crater had fallen far short of our expectations, and so we hoped for something very much finer in the crater itself.

With the approach of evening the temperature dropped to below fifty degrees, so that in spite of large fires the unfortunate porters, who were not furnished with sufficient blankets, suffered severely from the cold. The following morning the whole party shivered in the cold mist, and it was impossible to make the porters leave the comfort of their fires until the sun had been up

for nearly three hours and had dried the heavy dew with which everything was drenched.

Towards noon we had our first view of the Great Crater of Ngora Ngora, and a more wonderful sight can scarcely be imagined. Seen from the north-east hill, which formed the lip of the crater, there was a vast circular treeless plain some twelve miles across, part of it as green as an Irish field; to the west Lake Magadi, perhaps three and a half miles long, glistened like silver in the midday sun. Surrounding the almost smooth floor of the crater the walls rose from one to two thousand feet, forest-covered in some parts, in others bare, deeply furrowed and scarred. But what seemed most extraordinary was the mass of game roaming over this flat land, thousands and thousands of animals in small and large herds, in the distance appearing to consist chiefly of wildebeest. It looked like a great cattle ranch, and it was difficult to believe that these were really wild animals.

A sharp descent along a well-worn cattle trail led us to the base of the steep escarpment, into what is probably the greatest game concentration in the world of to-day. In every direction were the countless wildebeest in two's and three's, in straggling groups of several dozen, in densely-packed herds of many hundred; zebra too, but in lesser numbers; while here and there a few Grant's gazelle and hartebeest, or a drove of ostrich, gave variety. Passing near Siedentopf's Farm, we made our way across the plain, followed by the long trail of laden

" They would scamper off ; the zebra with a short gallop like a lot of piebald ponies "

" Wildebeest with tails up and heads down, galloping off like a lot of American bison "

porters, sometimes over ground scarcely hidden by the sparse grass, sometimes through clover, knee high and luxuriant; here and there through swamps and high reeds, across stony water-courses and wash-outs; but everywhere through herds of wildebeest and zebra. The animals would stand still in long lines and stare curiously at the intruders until they came within perhaps a hundred and fifty yards, when they would scamper off; the zebra with a short gallop like a lot of piebald ponies, the wildebeest with tails up and heads down, galloping off like a lot of American bison, kicking their heels in a playful way as they went and occasionally giving vent to strange grunts. After going a few hundred yards they would wheel round and, standing in open formation, face the column of men as though demanding an explanation for the intrusion. Of all antelope the wildebeest is the most completely devoid of beauty. Its face is almost unnatural in its ugliness; from its ferocious expression anyone would imagine it to be a most dangerous creature, but its evil appearance is nothing more than bluff, for in its wild state it is no more to be feared than any other antelope.

Camp was made on a small stream near the southern end of the lake, and not far from a forest of yellow-trunked "fever" trees. At this end of the lake, for about one quarter of its length, the water was hidden by masses of thick reeds or grass which gave ample protection to a number of hippo; so good indeed

was this protection that not one of the animals was seen during the two weeks that we remained in the crater, though their curious roars could be heard every night. How the hippo originally came to this crater is somewhat of a mystery. It is difficult to imagine the great clumsy animals making their way down the steep sides of the mountain surrounding the crater.

Notwithstanding the sheltered position of the crater, with the circle of high hills, the nights were very cold. Fogs and heavy dews were chiefly responsible for this, as the elevation, according to the barometer, was only five thousand five hundred feet. The fogs proved a serious handicap to photographic work, as the morning is the best time for finding and approaching game; but it was usually nine or ten o'clock before the power of the sun dissipated the mist, and by that time most of the animals, having finished their morning feed, would gather together in herds and rest for several hours, with sentries posted, so that it was almost impossible to approach within photographic range. In the afternoons, about the time when feeding would be resumed, there was on most days a violent rain-storm. These conditions, together with the almost complete lack of cover, made photographic work extremely difficult and unsatisfactory. Endless film could be made of the animals a hundred to two hundred yards away, which is really too far for interesting pictures, as the herds would either be facing the camera in a long line or else running away; but intimate pictures were

" In the afternoons there was on most days a violent rain-storm "

practically impossible to get. There were no particular water-holes to attract the game, as water could be obtained almost anywhere in the small streams, springs and swamps.

During the Great War the Germans used Ngora Ngora as a meat base, but notwithstanding the terrific slaughter of wildebeest for the purpose of supplying the troops, the number of animals does not appear to have been diminished. An accurate count is, of course, practically impossible, but from a very careful estimate there must have been about seventy-five thousand head of game in the crater in the spring of 1921. Curiously enough, these animals do not seem to leave the crater, even though there is nothing to prevent their doing so, for there are numerous trails leading up the steep slopes. There is, however, no reason why they should forsake a place where conditions are perfect: food is abundant and apparently inexhaustible, water can always be found, salt licks exist, and, except for man, they have only lions as enemies. On the western side of the crater, on the slopes of the escarpment, there are a fair number of lions which prey on the game, but it is doubtful whether they have any marked effect on the great herds. The only danger is disease. In the event of any epidemic, such as rinderpest, the entire herd might be exterminated within a few weeks; but as these animals do not usually come in contact with other wild creatures, the only chance of their becoming infected is from domestic cattle.

The time will come when the crater will probably be used for

cattle; what will happen then remains to be seen. Conditions for farming are apparently ideal, except for the remoteness of the place. The volcanic soil is of remarkable fertility, if one can judge from the unusual growth of clover, which is so luxuriant that to walk through it is difficult. Where it came from seems rather a mystery, for it is doubtful whether it is indigenous; apart from the frequent rains, heavy dews and mist give it the necessary moisture.

On the evening of the second day after our arrival a poor old rhino, who had made his home in the crater for many years, was foolish enough to come near the camp. He did not regard man as his enemy, for he had never been molested. Unfortunately, two of the party thought this an excellent opportunity for some easy shooting, and killed the wretched beast within sight of the tents. Not only was it an unnecessary thing to do, for there was no sport in killing an animal under such conditions, but it prevented what would most likely have proved a splendid chance for obtaining some interesting film. It showed conclusively that shooting and photography of wild animals cannot be combined with satisfactory results.

During the two weeks' stay in the crater a certain amount of film was exposed, but, as already stated, the conditions were not satisfactory, and only pictures of animals in the distance were obtained. Driving the vast herds of animals was tried, but, as usual, without success. One member of the party was

" There must have been about seventy-five thousand head of game in the crater "

confident that it could be done, but he had no experience of African game, and was surprised to discover that the animals always "broke back" as soon as they found themselves being pressed in any particular direction. On horseback it is possible to make these drives, but on foot, without hundreds of men, it is hopeless. While in the crater the rest of the party indulged in shooting and exploring the craters to the north, and in trying to get some clue to the supposed fossil remains of prehistoric animals which Dr. Reck, the German scientist, had endeavoured to find in 1914.

At the end of two weeks the food supply was getting very low, and the cold, damp nights were having a serious effect on the Arusha porters, a number of whom were laid up with fever and bad colds. It was decided, therefore, to move southward, but before doing so a couple of days were spent on the west side of the crater, the camp being made in a remarkable forest of Euphorbia (*Candelabra*). Usually these quaint trees are found singly or in small groups among other trees, but here there was a regular forest; the height of the trees was about thirty to sixty feet, and most of them were of slender growth with several vertical branches, each surmounted by a thick cluster of the curious cactus-like branches. Scarcely any of them had the characteristic form which is usually associated with this tree.

It was a strange place for a camp, beautiful, perhaps, but not altogether satisfactory, as the leaves of these trees contain a

milky fluid which is extremely poisonous. The slightest impact against the branch-like leaves causes the juice to flow, and since the natives, who are said to use the fluid to tip their poison arrows, believe that if any gets near the face it causes blindness, the camping ground was by no means popular among the porters.

An attempt was made while in this neighbourhood to have a lion drive with the help of some Masai. Several lion were found in the deep scrub-covered ravines, but all attempts to photograph them were rendered futile owing to the amount of shooting that was done by members of the party; and though I had recovered to some extent from the fever, I had to acknowledge myself beaten.

On the third morning we bid farewell to Ngora Ngora, and climbed up the steep escarpment on the south-west side of the crater, and arrived six hours later on the plateau, nearly eight thousand feet high, at the foot of Oldeani. Camp was made on the edge of a beautiful forest of superb trees whose branches were hung with festoons of grey moss and masses of orchids. Below the camp was a glade carpeted with rich green grass, which gave it the appearance of an ideal English park, as will be seen from the accompanying illustration, which was the actual view from the camp. In the opposite direction, beyond a foreground of rolling plains, covered with thick grass as gold in colour as a field of ripe wheat, stood Oldeani, some ten thousand five hundred feet in height. Its summit was hidden in the clouds,

"The camp was made in a remarkable forest of Euphorbia"

its base clothed in the soft green of the vast bamboo forest and the grey-green of moss-covered cedars. As a fitting adjunct to the picture a rhino strolled out of the forest as evening approached. Unfortunately, the tall grass partly hid him from view.

Early the following morning the journey was resumed in a south-westerly direction. The route led along the slopes of Oldeani over rough grassy ground strewn with innumerable volcanic stones, across endless deep ravines, through cedar forests, thorn trees and the beautiful sugar bush, which was a mass of bloom, through regular gardens of wild flowers such as cosmos, a sort of Canterbury bell, small wild geraniums, and large white anemones, and many other flowers too numerous to mention. About noon Lake Eyassi came in sight. Viewed from our high position, it presented a picture of extraordinary beauty in the varied light; in places it was bathed in sunshine, in others hidden from view by a quickly-moving thunderstorm. Its northern shore was bordered by an arid, deeply serrated, rocky ridge of hills. The lake is salty and very shallow, and has a length of about fifty miles and a maximum width of perhaps twelve.

Once during the day's march water was found, shortly after noon. From then on every water-course and ravine was absolutely dry, and the problem of a camping-place became more and more discouraging. The ground became increasingly rough

and difficult for the heavily-laden porters. Each ravine was examined carefully, but without result; digging was tried, but nothing was found except hard volcanic sand. It is usually advisable to make camp at least an hour or two before sunset, so that firewood and water may be obtained and the tents put up; but the hours passed, and still it was necessary to continue moving, always with the hope that the next ravine would supply the needed water; but finally it became impossible to go any farther. Several members of the party had separated from us soon after we had started in the morning, so I was conducting the safari. The sun was setting, and I finally decided to halt near a likely-looking, deep, tree-covered gully. Men were sent in both directions, but there was no sign of water. Finally spades were used, and eventually, after a lot of digging, the sand was found to be moist; this stirred the men to greater exertion, for without water they could not cook their maize flour. The result of the most strenuous exertion was that a few pails of the precious fluid were obtained; but it was nearly ten o'clock before each man received about a pint, barely enough for a small drink, and a limited ration of thick porridge.

The following morning we continued our march, unwashed and weary, but before noon, to the delight and relief of everyone, the sound of running water was heard. People who have never known what it is to need a drink or a wash have no idea what the sound of running water means to those who are tired and

"A glade carpeted with rich green grass, which gave it the appearance of an ideal English park"

thirsty. It was difficult to prevent the men dropping their loads and rushing to the stream.

Camp was made shortly after noon on the stream, which proved to be the Olgedju Olboscare, six or seven miles from Lake Eyassi. This lake was said to abound in hippo to such an extent that during the war the Germans relied almost entirely on these animals for their supply of fat, and as a result great numbers of hippo were killed. I was most anxious to secure good film of these curious creatures, and though still very weak from the long bout of fever, I decided to leave the camp (and those of the party who were only interested in shooting) for a day and try my luck with the hippo. Very early the following morning, accompanied by five porters carrying camera supplies, I started towards the lake. The country was fairly open, with a scattering of acacias, very large baobab trees and, near the lake, palms. In several places curious arrangements of stones were found; these stones were very large and more or less flat, arranged in a circle seventy or a hundred yards in diameter. What was their origin or purpose the porters did not know, nor was there any way of finding out. They may have marked out native villages, but if so it was an unusual method, as stones are seldom, if ever, used. To move such large stones would involve a good deal of work, and the natives of to-day never do any manual labour that is not absolutely necessary.

In the vicinity of the lake the ground was quite flat,

covered with tall, coarse grass, with groups of palms scattered about in pleasing relief. These palms bear large numbers of fruit in clusters, which the men knocked down and ate. This fruit has a hard, dry skin, covering a dry, fibrous mass, which has a not unpleasant flavour. The shores of the lake were reached about ten o'clock, and anything more foul smelling could scarcely be imagined; instead of firm ground the foreshore was composed chiefly of black ooze, encrusted with a pale grey, salty substance. The water was so shallow that in many places, several hundred yards from the edge, large flocks of pelican, flamingo and other birds were standing with their feet scarcely submerged. In the distance, with their backs showing, were a number of hippo much too far away to be photographed.

Thousands of terns, disturbed by our presence, flew up, screaming loudly. Evidently there was no chance for photographic work in this part of the lake, so we made our way with great difficulty along the odoriferous shore. Suddenly, while going over a particularly bad place, two of the porters became stuck. In their efforts to free their feet they gradually sank lower and lower until they were nearly submerged, and it looked as though men and cameras would disappear altogether; it was only with the greatest difficulty that the unfortunate fellows were finally rescued. They were surprisingly good-natured about it, and looked on their narrow escape as a big

The southern part of Ngora Ngora Crater where the lake is hidden by "fever trees"

joke; but until they had been thoroughly cleaned they were most unpleasant companions.

After going for about a mile along the lake we came to what was evidently the outlet of the river on which the camp had been made. The actual river was hard to find, as it formed a wide estuary overgrown with tall reeds through which ran narrow channels, evidently hippo water-ways to the lake. Following the scarcely-defined edge of the estuary for a short distance, we reached a small grove of tall acacias of the kind commonly known as "fever trees," probably because they are usually found in the neighbourhood of swamps. The grove surrounded an open space which was overgrown by tall reeds or grass. Numerous hippo tracks showed that this was a favourite place for the animals, so I decided to spend an hour or two under the welcome shade of the trees in the hope of a chance to get some photographs.

After waiting for some time a pair of bush buck appeared, and it looked as though they would come within range of the camera, which was concealed in a bower of overhanging vines. Closer and closer the graceful pair advanced, when suddenly there was a mighty roar and a crashing of brush immediately behind me. For a moment it seemed as though trouble was at hand. The carriers called out in terror "Simba! Tembo! Kifaru! Kiboko!" (lion, elephant, rhino, hippo), for the noise had come with such a surprise that their wits were confused,

and they thought only of the animals that were most feared. The bush buck having vanished, I decided to leave my shelter and investigate the cause of alarm. With the men carrying the camera very close to my heels, I moved cautiously along a hippo path towards the dense high grass of the open space. As it was impossible to see more than a few yards in any direction, each step had to be taken with care. A few minutes later, while going through some particularly dense grass, we were severely startled by a terrific grunt as an old hippo and her calf, alarmed by the presence of human beings, crashed through the undergrowth and made for the nearest water, into which they disappeared with a mighty splash. It had all happened so quickly that there had been no time to use the camera.

The alarm having been given, there was no likelihood of the hippo coming ashore again, so I decided to follow the course of the stream in the hope of finding the animals in some quiet pool. It was one thing to make this decision, but quite another to carry it out, for the vegetation bordering the water was such a dense tangle that it was nearly impossible to break a way through. Besides the matted vines, most of which were covered with thorns, there was saw-edged grass and tough palmetto with its cat-like thorns, which tore both clothing and flesh in a most disastrous manner ; and the heat was stifling.

For an hour or more we fought our way through this jungle, until, on coming to a clearer place, we made a detour

The edge of a beautiful forest of superb trees where branches were hung with festoons of grey moss.

which enabled us to reach a point farther up the stream, and approach without making too much noise. Hippo could be heard making their strange booming grunts, and the prospects for getting some film seemed almost good. Taking the cinema camera, I went ahead cautiously, until at last I was within sight of the water, a dark pool, perhaps a hundred yards long and fifteen wide, with high banks covered with vines and overhung by trees. Inch by inch I moved forward, one hand pushing aside each branch or blade of coarse grass, the other holding the heavy camera mounted on its tripod. The perspiration streamed down my face and nearly blinded me. Large seroot flies took advantage of the situation and bit or stung vigorously; but there was the possibility of a photograph, so the discomforts were ignored, more or less.

At last the actual bank was reached. Two hippo showed their heads above water, and the camera was quickly focused and the handle turned; but a moment later a gentle breeze carried the scent of man up stream to where a dozen or more hippo were hidden beneath a mass of tangled bushes. Instantly there was a mad scramble to escape; above there was apparently no place of safety, so they headed down stream, which meant that they must pass the camera at very close quarters. Parts of the pool were deep enough to allow the huge creatures to go under water, and at the speed they were going they made great waves which lashed the shores; but across the pool, about ten

yards above where the camera stood, there was a shallow bar where the water was only a foot or two in depth. In their frantic rush for safety the whole herd scrambled over this bar, tumbling over each other and making an appalling noise. A more amusing sight could not be imagined; but, unfortunately, it was only a few feet away from the camera, and it all happened so quickly, that before the instrument could be tilted down the excitement had passed, and with it one of the finest opportunities for a really unusual film of wild animals at home. My camera and I were splashed with water and black mud, and beyond a few feet of film of the two hippo's heads there was nothing to show in the way of pictures, which, of course, was most disappointing. Had the object been to shoot how easy would it have been to kill the wretched creatures, but the camera is vastly more difficult to handle than the rifle.

For several hours further attempts were made, but without success, and at last I decided to start back to camp, as the strenuous work was bringing on a return of fever, which in my weakened condition was scarcely surprising. Owing to the conditions of the country it was impossible to follow the stream back to camp, as it would not only have nearly doubled the distance but the denseness of the vegetation would have made walking slow and difficult, so we chose what was believed to be a direct route. By five o'clock the fever was so severe that every step was an effort. An hour later, when the sun

was setting, there was still no sign of camp, and in tropical countries darkness comes very quickly after the sun goes down. The situation, therefore, was anything but encouraging. With the coming of night it became worse, for I was so weak that even with the help of the porters I could scarcely walk; finally, I was forced to crawl on hands and knees. In vain did the men look for signs of the camp, where a fire should have been lighted on a conspicuous point as a beacon; but apparently no thought was being given to the absentees. At last, about half-past seven, the glow of small fires, well hidden in a depression, came into view, a most welcome sight, for it would not have been possible for me to go much farther.

The result of this hard day's work had weakened me seriously, but as the food supply was almost exhausted it was necessary to move forward towards our destination, Umbulu, without loss of time, and the following morning saw us on the march once more. It was a hard day's travel, the ground, though fairly open, being rough and stony and broken by endless ravines; the heat, too, was very trying. It was not till after nine hours of steady going that water was finally discovered and camp made. Owing to the fever that march was a nightmare, for my temperature was 104 degrees; a number of the porters, too, were more or less seriously ill.

A few porters had been sent off the previous day to Umbulu to get food and bring it back to the Matete River, where we

intended to camp for a few days, in order that two of the party might indulge in the dubious sport of hippo shooting.

While they were away one of the porters died. I was now the only white man in camp (as two of the party, Mr. and Mrs. F. A. Barns, had gone on ahead on their way to the Congo), and was so ill that I could not leave my bed. Of food there was practically none; altogether the prospects were anything but cheerful. But for me the worst had passed, and a few days later the fever broke and food arrived, and at last, one fine afternoon, another move was made.

It was dusk before a suitable camping-place was found, and in the dim light the tents were put up rather insecurely. Because of this, according to the usual way of things, a storm came with tropical suddenness and with terrific force, accompanied by a deluge of rain. I was in bed at the time, too weak to move much, when a powerful gust of wind caught the tent and away it went. By good luck a large ground sheet was handy, and this I pulled over the bed, so as to have an effective protection. Fortunately, the storm lasted but a short time, but everyone was thoroughly soaked, so that the greater part of the night was spent in stoking big fires and getting dry. The following morning, after going only four or five miles, camp was made, and two of the party decided to go after elephant and buffalo in the hills to the north; while I, being too weak to travel, and another who was also ill, stayed in camp.

It was a delightful spot with plenty of good water and really beautiful scenery, so that the eight days of rest were thoroughly appreciated.

The three days' journey to Umbulu was through wonderful hilly country; water was abundant and the trail for the most part quite good. The last day was through cultivated ground, where the men had abundant food, fresh maize, sugar cane and other delicacies, which were greatly appreciated after the meagre rations of the past weeks. The people of this district, known as the Wambulu, are a rather nice-looking lot, though they seemed more lightly built than most of the natives of other parts. The men have a passion for beads, which they wear chiefly as high collars or necklaces, and, strangely enough, pale green appears to be the favourite colour, although this particular colour is not popular with any of the Kenya tribes. The women wear remarkably beautiful garments made of leather and decorated with striking designs in beads.

Umbulu proved to be a typical German post with its battlemented fortress, which looked exactly like a big toy house, and, curiously enough, its position was such that it was overlooked by hills only a short distance away, so that strategically it could scarcely have been worse planned. One is always struck by the difference between German and British methods in Africa. The last thing we think of is a fort, but it is the very first consideration of the Germans. They seem to have always

been on the look-out for trouble; while we, being optimists, give little or no thought to trouble and avoid any display of power.

During the three days spent in Umbulu the usual courtesies and kindnesses were shown by the two officials, and fresh porters were procured to replace those who were left in hospital ı t well enough to continue their work. On the fourth day the journey towards Arusha was begun. The first day's march was along a fairly good road, winding its way among hills and across streams, rocky in parts, more or less cultivated in others; the general elevation of the road was about five thousand feet.

Camp was made shortly before sunset, at a place known as "World's View." It is rather an ambitious name, which was given to it by the Germans, but the view is quite remarkable, and especially so when seen in the late afternoon, for then the bold mountains in the foreground are in deep shadow and form a frame for the picture of Lake Manyara. On this particular afternoon the lake was like an opal, with all the delicate pinks and blues and with the pale, warm yellow of the clouds reflecting their colour in the placid water; while beyond it all was the golden yellow of the grass-covered rolling land and the distant hills. How hot it all looked from the cool camp! The very thought of having to leave the heights and make the long march across that land below made us appreciate all the more keenly the comfort of the present. Near the camp was

A typical camp, with cattle for milk and sheep for meat to avoid having to shoot game

a sad reminder of the war: a neatly-enclosed plot containing the graves of some of our men who had been killed. It seemed melancholy to think of them lying there, so far away from their native land, in this beautiful but isolated spot.

Early the following morning camp was broken, and the long line of porters made their way down the precipitous trail leading from the top of the escarpment to the great plains over two thousand feet below. It was a rough trail between boulders and jagged rocks, so steep in places that it was almost like going down a ladder. In little more than an hour the descent was made, and the level road to Madukani was reached. Here, for the most part, the going was easy and the country varied; long stretches of dense forests, where mosquitoes made most vigorous attacks and seroot and other flies added their unwelcome attentions; but as open country was reached these pests were to some extent left behind. Small native villages, composed of perhaps half a dozen or a dozen huts, were seen near the road. These diminutive villages were remarkable for their tidiness and also for the lowness of their huts. The people seemed very poor, but cheerful, smiling their welcome to the passing strangers. In the course of the march trouble was encountered in crossing the swamps. In some places the frail bridges had been washed away and the road was under water. This necessitated wading through the swamps, where the water was waist deep and the mud soft, sticky and full of leeches.

Madukani was reached at noon, a dreary, hot, uninteresting place in the middle of a flat, treeless, sun-baked country. German-made rest-houses offered welcome shelter from the powerful sun. The Germans had tried to grow cocoanuts in this place, but the yellow, stunted trees were evidence of the unsuitable conditions for these trees, which seem to demand the influence of salt water to thrive properly. As the region to the west of Madukani is well known for buffalo, two of the party thought it might be worth while spending a few days in the vicinity, so native experts were sent for, with very amusing results. According to these men there would be no trouble at all in getting any number of buffalo within a distance of a few miles. Cross-examination, however, revealed certain facts which, to put it mildly, were discouraging. A deep, swift river would have to be crossed, and to do this a couple of men would have to swim across and attach a rope to a tree in order that the others could hold on to this rope and so avoid being carried down stream. Then came the question of the actual hunting, which, it appeared, must be done in grass six to ten feet high, and there would always be a chance of coming on the buffalo literally face to face, and a buffalo has a face which no sensible person wishes to see at close quarters. When the subject of terms was discussed the trackers became quite enthusiastic, and stated the sum they would expect, but their expressions changed when it was suggested that if no satisfactory opportunities

for shooting buffalo occurred they would receive nothing, but if the attempt proved successful they would be paid double what they had asked. This, after all, was the final proof of their ability, and they were not willing to take the chance, so negotiations fell through, somewhat to the relief, perhaps, of those who had suggested the buffalo shoot.

Of the return journey to Arusha there is little of special interest to relate. Water was more abundant than it had been on the trip out, nearly two months earlier. Seroot flies were much more troublesome than before; so bad indeed were they that the wretched mules were driven nearly mad, and the men were only able to protect themselves by the constant use of fly switches. Game was rather more numerous, but there was no time to delay, as the party was already overdue at Nairobi. One afternoon a half-grown rhino afforded some amusement. He got wind of the safari, and charged about in a great state of excitement as though intending to do terrible things, but eventually he changed his mind and galloped off. A large herd of giraffe was seen feeding out in the open, some distance from the trees. It is somewhat unusual to see them eating low-growing plants, so of course I wanted to photograph them; but they were very shy, and would not allow the camera within several hundred yards. One night camp was made at a place where on the previous day a native who was in charge of some cattle had been killed by a lion and his body carried away.

On arrival at Arusha plans for getting back to Nairobi had to be discussed. Owing to heavy rains it was found that the road to Moshi, the railway terminus, was impassable for cars, so it was decided to motor direct to Nairobi, a distance of nearly four hundred miles. But before starting fresh porters had to be procured, and I had to undergo special medical treatment before being allowed to leave, as I was in a serious condition from the long bout of fever. On the evening of April 16th the whole party left Arusha. The road, which had been built for military purposes, was for the greater part of the way in good condition, though many of the bridges were down. This necessitated careful handling of the cars in getting across the dry river beds and up and down the steep banks. In one place a bridge was found still standing and spanning a fairly wide river, the banks of which were very steep. On examining the structure before letting the cars cross it was found that most of the supports were hanging in mid-air, their base having been eaten by ants. A man's weight on the bridge made it sag several inches. When three of us stood on it the sag was still more noticeable, so the question was, Could the cars cross? After some discussion it was decided to make the attempt, but everything was first carried over by hand. Then the first car started on its perilous journey, while we watched. The bridge sagged lower and lower, and it creaked in an ominous way, but the car arrived safely on the other side and was soon joined

by the second one. It was hard to understand why these bridges had been built of imported timber, which is splendid food for the white ants, when there was plenty of suitable timber growing in the vicinity.

The worst part of the journey was across the desert before reaching Longido, where water had to be carried for the porters. The ground was flat and covered everywhere with enormous ant-hills; trees were scarce, and scarcely any game was seen. The view of Kilimanjaro from this desert was wonderfully impressive, especially at sunrise, when the great mountain, with its snow-capped summit, stood like a lofty island above the sea of mist and low-lying clouds, which completely hid the lower country. On the fourth day the road crossed the boundary of Tanganyika and Kenya, and entered some beautiful park-like country, well wooded and with abundance of game. Giraffe were particularly numerous, and it was most amusing to see them race the cars; invariably they would, after running for some distance, make a frantic dash across the road, sometimes passing only a few yards in front of the fast-moving car.

Besil was reached on the evening of the fifth day, and the camp should have been called "Guinea Fowl Camp," for the place was alive with these birds; large flocks of them could be seen in all the open places along the river bank, so there was no difficulty in securing plenty of food. Leaving the safari

to proceed to Nairobi, we went forward in the cars, stopping on the way at Kajiado on the Magadi Railway to ascertain the best road to take. From Kajiado to Ngong the country is largely black cotton soil : in dry weather it is good for motoring, but with even a shower it becomes almost impassable; the wheels go round, but the car, instead of going forward, simply sinks into the ground. The rainy season is due in the Nairobi area early in April, and already there had been several heavy rains, but the last two days had been fine, so the chances were that the roads would be found in fairly good condition. Heavy clouds, however, were banking up to the east, and any moment rain might be expected. Should it have come during the run the cars would have been stuck. But by good luck they got through before the rain fell, and Nairobi was reached shortly after dark.

"Kilimanjaro was wonderfully impressive, especially at sunrise"

CHAPTER III

A SHORT TRIP TO THE MARA RIVER AND THE END OF THIS JOURNEY

FROM Nairobi our plan was to go north to Kijabe and west from there to the Mara River, where there was reason to expect that game, particularly lion and elephant, would be found in abundance. Accordingly, ten days later, having sent the men ahead with the camp equipment, we started by car. In going down the Kedong escarpment one of the cars developed serious trouble, resulting in a bad smash, which very nearly hurled us to an untimely death. The driver lost control in a steep part of the winding road, and the situation was only saved by crashing into the bank. If this had not been done, the car would have gone over the rocky precipice. Thanks to the kindness of Mr. Greswell Williams, who came to the rescue, we were able to get to Kijabe by dusk, and were taken care of by Mr. Boise Agate, who also was kindness itself.

The view from Kijabe is one of the finest on the Uganda Railway. The great Rift Valley, which stretches to the west as far as the eye can see, is under six thousand feet above sea-level, while Kijabe is at an elevation of over eight thousand feet.

To the east of the railway the mountains are covered with dense forests of various trees, most conspicuous among them being the cedar, which at this altitude attains remarkable growth. In these mountains the strange black and white, long-haired colobus monkeys live in fair numbers. When seen jumping from branch to branch they have the appearance of large black and white birds. This, too, is the home of the rare and elusive bongo, the handsomest of all the forest antelope. Leopard are so numerous that the residents have to guard their dogs with the greatest care, for the leopard is particularly fond of dog meat, and will display an almost reckless bravery in attacking them, even a tent and fires are not sufficient protection. One daring leopard came to Agate's house during our stay and disturbed us by prowling about on the roof. As the windows were open it caused a certain amount of fear.

There are few parts of Kenya more attractive than the region about Kijabe. The scenery is wonderful and varied, the climate perfect, although cold enough at night to make fires a necessity, and beautiful walks or rides are endless through the forests, where crystal-clear streams make their way beneath the shade of luxuriant trees, moss-covered and flower-bedecked. Birds of exquisite colouring and gorgeous butterflies add to the beauty of the scenes. Here and there, as surprises, are found hot springs whose vapour rises ghost-like in the dark, secluded glens, and makes the growth of ferns and flowers truly tropical.

Where the white man has taken possession of this land of wonder he grows everything that would thrive in both northern and southern countries. English roses flower almost continually. English vegetables hob-nob with their relations from the tropics. Figs, strawberries and mulberries, pears and peaches have bananas and pineapples for neighbours. No *Swiss Family Robinson* ever imagined a greater variety or a greater abundance. Pigs are fed on surplus figs, for the crops are greater than can be used by the owners. Cape gooseberries grow like weeds, and yet this country imports jam from England, when if only proper attention were paid to sugar growing[1] Kenya could not only supply its own needs but could export jam to other less-favoured countries.

With its varying altitudes, its rich and equally varied soil, its fairly regular water supply in the way of rain and streams, there is probably no limit to what can be grown in Kenya. Up to the present coffee has proved, perhaps, the most popular product. Sisal and maize come next, but the time will probably come when maize will be the chief crop, owing to the fact that the area of land suited to it is almost unlimited. This, coupled with the universal demand for maize, will make it the greatest crop of the country. Irrigation is, of course, an expensive undertaking, but in certain parts, where the rivers have a sufficient and constant volume of water, there are great tracts of hitherto unused land which has the stored-up energy of

[1] I understand that sugar is now being made in Kenya.

countless thousands of years of sunshine. These could be used for maize if only the water could be brought to it with regularity.

Wheat, oats and barley do very well in suitable localities. Cotton and tea are being tried. Flax is an established product, though its future does not seem to be altogether assured. Timber of fine quality and great variety is so abundant that it could more than supply the needs of the country, though it is doubtful whether, owing to cost of transportation, it would ever pay to export it; cedar for pencils is, however, being sent abroad. Cattle thrive well in the practically unlimited pasturage that is available. Sheep do very well and so do pigs. It will be seen, therefore, that Kenya promises to be virtually self-supporting, while the amount of its exports are growing with remarkable and gratifying speed.

The colony has an area of nearly two hundred thousand square miles, which is greater than that of Great Britain, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia combined, while the population is considerably less than that of London. Consequently, the question of labour is a serious one. A large proportion of the natives are Masai, whose natural aversion to work is well known. Beyond cattle raising they will do little or nothing. The Kikuyu, Kavirondo, Wakamba, and others are agriculturists, and it is to these that the settlers must look for labour. With improved conditions and adequate medical attention infant

mortality will probably be reduced and the population will increase. Generally speaking, outside of the Masai and some of the northern tribes, such as the Boran, Rendili and others, the natives are fairly good workers, but of course not yet trained or disciplined to do more than they consider necessary for their own needs. The prospects, however, are not at all discouraging, as some people seem to consider; but the future must depend very largely on how the country is governed in regard to the natives. So far they have been treated most fairly. It is true we have taken over their country, but by so doing we have made their lives easier, they are protected against enemies who in the past waged constant warfare, their possessions are safe, and they are, in fact, better off in every way, notwithstanding what anyone may say to the contrary. The white settler even complains that they have been treated too generously, because great tracts of the finest land, which some of the white men covet, have been made over to them as "native reserves."

An early start was made from Kijabe as soon as the car had undergone the necessary repairs. Camp had already been made at Salt Marsh, seventy-eight miles to the west, so that was to be our destination for the day. In the soft, warm sunlight of early morning the country looked its best, and the run across the Kedong and Rift Valley was a delight. Game was fairly abundant, chiefly hartebeest, zebra and Grant's gazelle. The

journey was at first over the level grassy plains, then up a long steep ascent, part of the way up the Mau escarpment, which rises to the north nearly three thousand feet above the plains. From now onward the country was more or less densely wooded and very varied, with numerous river-beds, some dry and others with water. The road for the greater part was fairly good, but here and there rocky gullies put a severe test on the Ford, which, however, finally surmounted all obstacles with the true Ford spirit, and we arrived at Salt Marsh early in the afternoon.

The camp was in a delightful place under large thorn trees bordering the curious " marsh," which at this season was almost entirely dry. The source of the supply for the camp was a most uninviting puddle, used by great numbers of native cattle, and the water, which had a strong and disagreeable odour and extremely unpleasant taste, was somewhat salty. Otherwise the camp was perfect, and the scenery rather unusual. The marsh itself, which is about half a mile or more in length, is a flat mass of clay hummocks or tussocks, covered with short, coarse, wiry grass ; between the tussocks the sun-cracked flats of clay have a curious salty appearance. Surrounding the marsh are thorn trees of considerable size, and here and there are clusters of a curious cactus, which I have never seen elsewhere in Africa. The stems, which reach a height of twenty or thirty feet or even more, are covered with drooping or dead leaves,

and the top is surmounted by a crown of aloe-like living leaves, from the centre of which grow sprays of brilliant orange-coloured flowers. Trees and scrub form a belt of varying width round the swamp, and beyond this are great stretches of open, rolling country very much like the moors of Ireland or Scotland. In the distance are the blue hills of the Lemek.

On this dry moorland could be seen great herds of wildebeest and smaller herds of Grant's gazelle. All attempts at photographing by stalking proved unsuccessful, owing to the wildness of the animals and the absence of cover. Had there been time "blinds" could have been built at suitable places where there were water-holes, and in all probability good photographs would have been obtained. At the Salt Marsh itself there would have been splendid opportunities if the camp had been farther away. During the rains this would be a perfect place, as the settings were really beautiful, but under the existing conditions, with all the noise of a large camp, there was no chance for using the camera. Late in the afternoon small herds of Grant's gazelle visited the marsh, evidently for the salt licks, but it was then too late for photography.

Owing to the slight illness of some members of the party, it was decided that I should go on ahead to the Mara River in the hopes of finding elephant and other game. So on the third day I left with a dozen porters and a small supply of food and arrived two days later at the river. Elephant signs were

abundant, but all were at least two weeks old, so it was evident the herds were no longer in the immediate vicinity. Other game was numerous, though not within a mile or two of the river. In the course of a day spent in investigating very large herds of eland and wildebeest were seen, and one day was spent in a hiding-place in the hope of getting photographs, but every time any game came in sight great herds of Masai cattle would arrive, and of course the game moved off. In the river hippo were said to exist, but though men were sent out in search of them none were reported.

On the third evening at the camp an unusually exciting incident occurred. With the exception of the man on watch everyone had turned in, when about nine o'clock the growls of several lion gave warning of possible trouble. The camp was in a small open space, covered with high grass and about a couple of hundred yards across; surrounding this on three sides was dense bush, while on the fourth side was the river, the bank being covered with thick vegetation. It is not usual for lion to make any noise when contemplating an attack. I was therefore surprised at the almost continuous growling, which at times was very loud, almost a roar, in fact. And it was somewhat disconcerting that the lion were all round the camp, except on the river side. In the centre of the camp my mule was tethered between two fires, as this was known to be a bad place for lion. With the first growls the men were awake, and

with blankets wrapped round them they all came as close as possible to the fire for protection. After the first few minutes of the serenade, with its rapidly-increasing volume of sound, the men called me to bring my rifle, as the lion were going to attack. Naturally enough, I was sceptical, as I had never heard of such a thing as a concerted and noisy attempt to rush a camp, and yet everything seemed to point to such an extraordinary thing happening, so I got up and joined the shivering porters. How many lion there were I could not tell, but the loud growls seemed to come from every direction, and there must have been at least a dozen of the animals, probably more. Such a row I have never heard elsewhere, feeding time at the Zoo was nothing to it. Evidently the lion were coming very much closer, until the nearest ones could scarcely have been more than twenty yards away. The night was intensely dark, so that beyond the masses of trees and the yellow glow from the fire nothing could be seen. Altogether it was a weird scene. I made the men light several fires around us, for it really looked as though we were to be attacked. The wretched mule was in a state of absolute panic, and two men had to hold him to prevent his stampeding. For fully half an hour the lion kept up their incessant growling, with occasionally a terrific roar which frightened the men almost to death. Then suddenly there was an appalling row as several lion engaged in a fight in the thick grass behind the tents. The noise was almost deafening,

as others of the party joined in. The fight lasted only a few minutes, and then it ceased and not a sound could be heard. Not knowing whether this meant the beginning of the actual attack we all waited, breathless with excitement, the men brandishing burning sticks in the hope of frightening the animals; but nothing further occurred, and soon I went back to my small tent and turned in. The men, however, sat up for an hour or two, huddled round the enormous fires, where they finally slept peacefully for the rest of the night. I can hear the "gentle" reader (why readers are supposed to be gentle is a mystery) laugh incredulously at this account, and say we must have imagined the whole thing; but I can assure him that I have told the truth and nothing but the truth, as I have not sufficient imagination to make up a story of such a strange experience. I may add, however, to show that there really were a large number of lion in this particular place, that within a few weeks of that exciting night no less than thirty-five were shot where my camp had been. Whether the whole thirty-five had visited us I cannot say, but my men swore they were in dozens if not hundreds, and if sound can be relied on there was justification for their statement.

The following morning I received word that the rest of the party had made camp farther up the Amala or Mara River, so I made my way there. Unfortunately, it was found that we could no longer work together, and I decided that I should take

my wife and family back to Nairobi as soon as porters could be obtained. My daughter and I rode to the Boma, where we hoped to find the District Commissioner, through whom we could engage porters. On our way the trail led us through a belt of scrubby forest through which a large herd of elephant had passed very recently; from the size of the tracks it was evident that there were some very large animals in the herd. My daughter, who was only fifteen years old, was greatly thrilled, and wanted to wait about in hopes of seeing the elephant; but as I was unarmed I decided to move along into the open country, where we could see better. Elephant do not often attack without direct provocation, but if we happened to be in the middle of the herd there might have been trouble, and the mules would have been difficult to control, so that I did not care to take any unnecessary chances, much to my daughter's disgust. There was very little game to be seen, a wart-hog or two and an occasional dik-dik or duiker; but elephant signs were everywhere abundant. Great trees had their branches torn from them, smaller trees were uprooted, most of which had been done during the past night. Birds were fairly numerous, and among other species we saw quite a number of the beautiful plantain eaters. Along the woodland trail butterflies of gorgeous colours were very abundant; in some places where there was moisture the ground was carpeted with them. I have never seen a more wonderful collection.

On arriving at the Boma the Goanese clerk informed us that the Commissioner was away, but that he would send out for what porters we required; it would, however, take several days, perhaps even a week, as the Kisii porters were quite a long distance away. This was most disappointing, as I was anxious to start homeward as soon as possible, and the prospect of continuing in camp under existing conditions was anything but pleasant. However, there was no way out of it, so after sending messages to Nairobi to ensure our securing a passage on the next steamer, we returned to camp. The days dragged along slowly, our only amusements were fishing and watching the antics of monkeys that used to have games on a broken-down bridge not far from camp. One day a member of the party, accompanied by a native, rode to the Boma. On their way back they ran into a herd of elephant in the forest where we had seen the tracks. Just what happened we never knew, but we were told that a badly-frightened pair of men came into the Boma at record speed, and did not risk returning to camp till the following morning. Apparently the elephant had gone for them, but fortunately without doing any damage.

It was nine days before our porters finally arrived, and the following morning we left the camp, which had been far from a pleasant one. During this time some of the party had shot an elephant and several lions at my former camp. The shooting had been done from a comfortable platform, or machan,

My daughter fishing on the Mara River

in a large tree with the aid of large searchlights! On arriving at the Boma we were very warmly welcomed by the District Commissioner, who invited us to spend the night there, so that we could make an early start the following morning. The journey to the Lemek, a distance of about sixteen miles, was through some of the most beautiful country, but game was very scarce. From there our way took us through Salt Marsh, Narok and over the Mau Hills, where a mule cart had been sent to meet us. Unfortunately, the mules bolted on the way down the steep road. The native driver had the presence of mind to turn them off the rocky road into the thick scrub just as the traces broke, so we were saved from what promised to be a serious accident. At the bottom of the escarpment a good old Ford car was waiting for us, and by evening we were safely in Kijabe enjoying the kind hospitality of Mr. Agate, and the following day we were at Nairobi. A couple of weeks later we embarked on the steamer at Mombasa for a short tour to Zanzibar, Daresalaam and Tanga.

It is difficult to imagine a more picturesque place than Zanzibar, with its extremely narrow streets, its quaint Arab buildings with their wonderful carved doors, and the bright-coloured fruit market, where delicious fruit may be had at absurdly low prices; but the characteristic feature of the place, above all, is the ever-present aromatic scent of cloves. The island furnishes, I believe, nearly three-quarters of the world's

supply of this spice. The miniature railway, which is, I think, the smallest and shortest in the world, looks like a large toy as it winds its way through the town and out to the clove plantations at a speed that could never be considered dangerous by even the most nervous of people.

Daresalaam was our next port. It is a fine, land-locked harbour and a well-laid-out town carried out with true German thoroughness, but the place is very hot and has not much attraction for white people. There was evidence of the recent war in the wrecked vessels in the harbour. Tanga also boasts a good harbour and is well planned, but is none too healthy, and I think we were all glad that our stay there was of short duration. From there we returned to Mombasa, and after picking up a full complement of passengers, started homeward.

The whole trip had been a very great disappointment. Between illness and other conditions over which I had no control, it had been a failure so far as my work was concerned. Yet with proper managment it might have been a wonderful trip, and I therefore determined to take the first possible opportunity to revisit the country and do the photographic work that I knew could be done.

"It is difficult to imagine a more picturesque place than Zanzibar"

CHAPTER IV

KENYA AGAIN—THE JOURNEY TO MARSABIT—VARIOUS GAME AT LASARMIS WATER-HOLE

LESS than six months after my return to England I was once more headed for Kenya, thanks to the generosity and kindness of Mr. William P. Harris, an American, who, like myself, was keen on photographing wild animals and particularly anxious to visit Africa. We were equipped with a splendid outfit for cinematograph work.

Travelling in Africa to-day is very different from what it was when I first went there in 1908. Then motor-cars were unknown in the country, and everything was done on foot, or if the trip was through regions that were free from tsetse fly horses and oxen might be used. But to-day the fly belts are well known, so that with reasonable care there is little to be feared from the fly. Motors, moreover, are the accepted means of conveyance, and so the picturesque safari is becoming more and more a thing of the past. To-day one seldom sees the long lines of porters marching out of Nairobi, they are sent on by train to a rendezvous or are collected in the outlying districts. Sometimes they are even taken by motors. Of course, this is

a great advantage for the sportsman who has but a short time at his disposal, as he now reaches his selected place in a day or two, where before it meant perhaps several weeks spent in marching, which was hard work and often very dreary. Still, I cannot altogether help preferring the old method, which had its own particular charm and fascination, even if it did involve a certain amount of hardship.

On this trip time had to be considered, so it was decided that we should send the porters engaged in Nairobi (for they are, after all, the best that can be found in the country) on ahead to Meru, on the north-east of Kenya, with very light loads so that they could travel faster, while the main outfit was taken by lorry. This allowed us a few extra days in Nairobi to complete certain arrangements, and then we started in a car, Leslie Tarlton, Harris and myself. Things were planned so that we should all meet at Meru on the same day, but even the most carefully-worked-out plans do not always materialise as they should.

It was on February 8th, 1922, that we left Nairobi and made our way towards Meru, going by Fort Hall and along the road that bordered the southern slopes of Kenya. Owing to the many hair-pin bends in the road our speed was necessarily slow, and we did not reach Embu till late the first day. A rest-house gave us shelter for the night, and the following morning at daybreak we resumed our journey, stopping near a beautiful ice-cold stream, the Thurchi, for a bath and

"A beautiful ice-cold stream, the Thurchi"

breakfast. From then onward the scenery was remarkably fine, as the road wound its way round the great spurs of the mountain, through deep gullies shaded by dark forest trees, many of which were ablaze with flowers. To the north Kenya reared its magnificent sharp-pointed peaks above the fleecy clouds which clung to the vast forests with which the slopes are covered. To the south lay the valley of the Tana River, almost lost in the purple haze of heat, above which the tops of many cone-shaped hills loomed up like islands. Along the road, as we neared our destination, small native villages appeared among the trees, the thatched huts taking their place in the landscape as though part of the natural growth. Occasionally we passed natives of the Meru Kikuyu tribe, usually women, carrying loads of bananas or fire-wood on their backs and arrayed in skirts of brown leather, or rather hide, and ornamented with innumerable necklaces and ear-rings of pink, white and blue beads. Small naked children scampered away from the roadside with their flocks of goats as the car approached and hid in the scrub, their little smiling black faces peering out to watch the passing car, anxious to see without being seen. They are cheerful little people these children. They have no schools to worry them, and spend their days, from the time they are about four years old until they are ten or twelve years old (when the girls are approaching marriageable age, and the boys do the heavier work of cultivating the small farms), looking after

the herds of goats, sheep and cattle. The small boys, usually devoid of the encumbrance of clothing, carry sticks and bows and arrows of diminutive size. What they do with these primitive weapons I have never been able to discover, but carrying them gives the youngsters a feeling of importance. What they would do in the event of their flocks being attacked by leopard or lion I do not know.

We overtook our porters about fifteen miles before reaching Meru, which was unfortunate, as it meant that for the first night we should be without any of our outfit. However, we made the best of the conditions, procured some tinned food from the Indian store at Meru, and camped out without tents and with only one thin blanket each. It was not altogether comfortable, as the cold was intense and we were soaked by the heavy dew. Fortunately for us it did not rain. We could get no news of the lorry containing our outfit, except that there had been heavy rain somewhere near Nanyuki (the lorry had taken the road on the north side of Kenya), so we concluded the heavy car had been stuck in the black cotton soil roads. On the morning after our arrival we called on the District Commissioner, and were told that there would be difficulty in getting a sufficient number of porters for our proposed journey to Marsabit, that it would take at least a week to get the Meru men in from the outlying district, and also that food was very scarce. We were advised to arrange for ox transport, as

Arab dhows in Tanga Harbour

otherwise we would not be able to carry sufficient food for the men to last for the month or two that we expected to be away, as a man can only carry sufficient food to last him a month when he is carrying nothing else.

In order that we should make use of the enforced delay the Commissioner very kindly arranged a big dance or ngoma, which would give us a chance of getting some interesting film. The following day the lorry arrived after having had rather a bad time owing to the condition of the roads, and the day after that the natives began to arrive for the dance. It was not, however, till late in the afternoon that they had all assembled, too late for any photographic work. Luck was not kind to us, for the next day, just as the dance was about to start, it began to rain in torrents. This was very discouraging, and meant a marked falling-off in the spirits of the dancers. However, the promise of extra meat cheered them up, and the following morning, with the sun shining clear and bright, the dance began in earnest. It was a wonderful sight, for all the men were dressed in their very best attire, and their best was very gorgeous. No two were alike. There were strange head-dresses of every conceivable form, colour and material, some of immense ostrich plumes arranged in fantastic designs, others of monkey skin as large as the Guards' "bear skins," while one magnificent warrior made himself conspicuous and the envy of all by wearing a "bonnet" made from a very fine lion's

mane. He had killed the lion single-handed with a spear, and was not a little proud of his daring feat. The garments worn were none too abundant, and were made of various animal skins and bright, strangely-patterned cotton cloth. Plumes of feathers and colobus monkey hair decorated the legs, while an endless assortment of beads and metal bracelets and necklaces added colour and jingle. Some, to make more sure of the jingle, had large bells attached to their arms and legs. In nearly every case the ears were filled with a strange assortment of things, such as blocks of wood, tin boxes, rings and innumerable safety-pins, these last being stuck right through the ear. Each man carried a long spear, beautiful examples of native workmanship, the steel being made by themselves, and a long, sword-like knife, encased in a sheath of red skin, tipped with tufts of monkey hair or other forms of decoration. Shields, of course, were carried, and these were painted with bold designs in black, white and red, presumably of family patterns, for no two were alike.

The women were for the most part dressed in skirts of brown leather, embroidered most tastefully with small beads. The upper parts of the body were usually bare, with necklaces, ear-rings and bracelets of wire and beads in great profusion. Their heads were either shaven clean or covered with very finely-braided short wool; unlike the men, who indulged in long hair, twisted in plaits, with pigtails wrapped with rafia

of some sort. People of the Meru Kikuyu tribe vary greatly in colour, ranging from ebony black to a soft copper, which is really very beautiful. The music for the dance was furnished by singing and hitting sticks against the spears or thin poles carried by most of the women. The songs, though at first pleasing to the ear, became rather monotonous, as there was so very little variety.

The first of the dances was performed by the warriors, or morans, who did a sort of quick trot-like march, varied occasionally by high jumps and charges. Then came the mixed dance, in which the men and women in pairs went round and round together with a sort of shuffling of the feet to the time of the songs. After that the men lined up in a row opposite an equal number of women; the men placed their hands on the women's shoulders, while the women's hands were placed on the men's hips. They then proceeded to jump up and down, higher and higher, in a ridiculous way, which must prove very exhausting. For this dance the men wore clothing which completely covered their bodies.

It was fourteen years since I had seen a similar dance at Meru, and strangely enough very little change had taken place either in the dances themselves or in the costumes. Perhaps a little more clothing was worn, and the war dances were not quite so vigorous. Safety pins and empty tins had replaced to some extent the original native ornaments of ivory and crude

metal. Paints, used both on the shields and the person, were no longer entirely of native origin. Formerly nothing but red, black and white were used, and these were made from earths and charcoal; but to-day mixed paints, evidently bought in shops, were to some extent in evidence; not so much so, however, as in the vicinity of Nairobi, where one saw men painted all over with bright greens, reds, blues and yellows, crude and glaring in their intensity.

I have said that the dances have scarcely changed during the past fourteen years, and I wish I could say the same of the people themselves; but in them I noticed a marked change, and it was not for the better. Their nice, cheery manners, which had been so attractive, have vanished to a great extent, and in many other ways the change is noticeably for the worse. I was very glad to secure good films of the Meru dances, because it will be but a short time before they will change completely, and the films will then become interesting records of the native in his primitive state.[1]

The Meru dance, for which we had been responsible, lasted for two days and nights, and we were thoroughly sick of the

[1] It is unfortunate that no attempt appears to be made to have cinema films properly preserved.. We who make them, often at great expense, have neither the money nor the means for preserving the results of our work, and the day will come when people will wake up to the fact that the records have gone, and that the films that we enthusiasts have made are lost for ever.

continuous and monotonous chanting. A native dance is rather like a fire, it is easier to start than to stop. However, human endurance has its limits, and at last the natives ceased their exertions and departed for their various homes, having feasted well on the cattle we had given them in return for their interesting performance.

On the sixth day after our arrival the first batch of porters came into Meru, fifty-seven of them, and the rest turned up the following morning, ninety all told. They were not a very promising-looking lot, and we had to reject sixteen as quite unfit. The others, when they heard that we were making for Marsabit, looked very miserable. They knew that it meant going across a desert, that water would be scarce, fruit unobtainable, the heat great, and altogether they could see no reason for leaving the comforts of their own homes, where they led a lazy life and had plenty of the sort of food they liked. The interpreter pointed out to them what wonderful things they could do with the money they would receive (they got ten shillings a month and their food !), and so in the end they "signed on" with finger-mark signatures. But when we left Meru on February 17th I was very much discouraged at the prospect of making a long trip with such a wretched lot of porters, especially as we were going to a region where we could not possibly replace any that proved entirely useless. So we decided on the way to our first camp that it would be

better if Harris and Tarlton went off in the motor in the hope of securing a couple of wagons with oxen. They returned the following day with the good news that a man named Duggand, one of the best fellows I have ever met, would arrive in a day or two, and we would be able to dispense with our Meru porters.

On the fourth day Duggand arrived, to our great satisfaction, and we informed the Meru men that we would not require them after all. Instead of grumbling at their dismissal they were tremendously pleased, especially when told that each man would receive a present of a week's pay, and they left us the following morning as happy as boys leaving school. During the stay at Furrow Camp we had seen a fair amount of game, giraffe, hartebeest and oryx, and had secured some interesting film of a large herd of giraffe, so the time had been well spent, and we started off on our journey northward with every reason to hope that the trip would work out well.

The road to the Guaso Nyiro did not prove very interesting. It was intensely hot, and game was scarce. An old cow rhino and her youngster were seen, but in very thick scrub, so that photographing was out of the question. The country was remarkably dry, and it was with difficulty that we found a sufficient supply of water for the needs of the camp. Several of the Nairobi porters had become desperate with thirst, and had thrown down their loads to go in search of water.

Eventually they found some, but it was long after dark before they turned up. Our head-man proved to be almost useless, and was unable to maintain discipline. Instead of marching behind the column, he would as often as not be ahead, where he could not see what was happening. We had to threaten him with all sorts of terrible things if he ever allowed the men to take French leave. If once men feel that they may straggle and stop when they want and meander away in search of water, there is always danger that they may get lost, either intentionally or by accident, or that they may meet with trouble in the form of a lion or rhino. Loads, too, may be lost, which might easily prove serious. The only way to run a safari in a thoroughly satisfactory manner is to keep it compact and in regular order, with rests at proper intervals. These intervals have to be decided by conditions, shade and water being the most important factors; but as these are not always to be found it is sometimes necessary to halt in undesirable places. In no case do I consider it advisable to make the men march more than an hour and a half without a rest, and I always insist on the loads being laid out in a line, rather than thrown about in a promiscuous way. Some porters have a dislike for camp work, and try to straggle behind the column and arrive at camp after all the tasks have been done. The work has to be carried out with some idea of system, otherwise there is endless confusion. As soon as a camp site has been found certain men are told off

for each job, some to put up tents, which is always done under the supervision of the askaris, some to get water, and others to collect sufficient firewood for the night. Once the men get it into their heads that the work must be done in a certain way everything goes smoothly. A good head-man is of the utmost value, but they are not easy to find, and when one has secured a competent man he must never be allowed to slack. System is not a marked characteristic of the African native, but once he has been made to understand that it is necessary he soon falls in with the idea and shows really a great deal of intelligence in doing his work. Of all the porters I have tried none have proved more satisfactory than the Swahili. He is cheerful and, under proper management, most efficient. Unfortunately, since the war, it is not very easy to secure the type of porter that was common in the old days. Local porters are apt to be useless when taken from their own district. They are accustomed to certain conditions, and do not always take kindly to marked changes of climate and country. Some people prefer taking the risk of picking up local men, largely because they are cheaper, but I think this is a great mistake. They may cost less per man, but as a rule they carry less, and as they eat just as much, in the end they are more expensive and usually far less satisfactory.

To return to our trip. We arrived at the Guaso Nyiro, opposite Archer's Post, on the 23rd, and found that Mr. and

Mrs. Martin Johnson, whose films of Kenya are so well known, were encamped near the river. We made camp not far from some springs of wonderfully clear, clean water, in colour almost like the famous blue grotto of Capri, but of a shade that was rather more greenish. Its beauty was deceptive, as it proved to be decidedly saline, and was said to possess certain unpleasant medicinal properties. The camp, though in rather interesting country, with the palm-lined banks of the river only a few hundred yards away, had the drawback of large numbers of mosquitoes, and consequently a serious risk of fever both to ourselves and the men; so we were not sorry to make an early start the following morning. We had only come about forty miles since leaving Meru, and seventeen days had passed since we had started from Nairobi, a most regrettable loss of valuable time. However, we had collected a lot of useful information on the way regarding the country north of the Guaso Nyiro.

After some difficulty with the car in crossing the river, which, fortunately, was very low, the men were sent on ahead with the ox-wagons, while we called on the officers of the K.A.R stationed at Archer's Post, and left one sick porter at the hospital. We then started in the car on the way to Marsabit, which we decided was to be our destination. From all accounts we hoped to find good opportunities for photographing game at some of the water-holes on the way, and at Marsabit itself we would be almost certain to find elephant, buffalo and probably rhino.

The distance from the Guaso Nyiro to Marsabit is about one hundred and forty miles. The road, we were informed, was fairly good, and we could have done the distance in one day with the car if all had gone well, but as our speed was regulated by the slow walk of the oxen, from fifteen to twenty miles a day was the best we could expect to do. In the car we took a complete set of photographic equipment, so that we could be ready to take advantage of any opportunity to secure films of game.

Soon after leaving the river game became more and more abundant. Large herds of the beautiful Grévy's zebra and oryx watched us in a surprised way as we rushed past, leaving a trail of dust behind. Grant's gazelle and hartebeest also were seen in small numbers, and a pair of graceful gerenuk. The country was stony and more or less flat, with scattered thorn trees and low scrub. Farther away were groups of rocky, conical hills, so typical of Africa, ranging in height up to above seven or eight thousand feet above sea-level, while the general level of the low, rolling country was about three thousand. The road or trail proved to be exceptionally good after we had gone a few miles from the river. It was fairly smooth in parts, with hard sand in others and more or less gravelly. The first camp was made at Larisero, a dry, sandy river bordered by dom palms and large, flat-topped thorn trees. Water was obtained from an ancient well, for we were on an old caravan road that

" The broad river was nothing but a bed of burning hot sand"

had been used for countless years. The following morning the porters and oxen made an early start, while Tarlton carried a supply of water in the car; this he deposited at the next camp, which was on the banks of a dry river. He then returned for us, and we reached camp before noon, glad to get under the shade of the trees, for the heat was intense.

Two days later we came to Kinya, where we had a beautiful camp under enormous thorn trees, which afforded shade that was only too welcome. We were only a little more than one degree north of the Equator and scarcely three thousand feet above sea-level. The country was intensely dry, and the broad river was nothing but a bed of burning hot sand. The question of water became serious; none of the holes dug by passing Somalis and others contained the slightest sign of moisture, so there was nothing to do but put the men to work with spades, which, fortunately, we had brought with us. Not till they had gone down ten feet or more did they strike water, and the quality was none too good even then. However, it was wet, and that was all that really mattered. In four days we had only covered about forty miles, but a small part of our long journey.

In the vicinity of Kinya, notwithstanding the lack of water, game was fairly abundant. We saw numerous giraffe (reticulated), and Grévy's zebra and a few scattered lots of oryx. Gerenuk were in greater number than I had ever seen. They appear to

like dry, sandy country, and it is strange how difficult it is to see these delicately-built gazelles when they stand motionless in the broken light and shade of the sparsely-leaved thorn bushes. Their abnormally long necks allow them to see over the tops of the scrubby bushes, while their bodies are almost concealed from view; only when they bound gracefully away does one realise their existence, though they may have been but a few yards distant. Stalking them with a camera is most unsatisfactory, as in order to secure good pictures it is necessary to see the animals before they see you, so that the camera may be focused and ready. It is, indeed, a clever man who can stalk a gerenuk to within photographic range without being seen. They do not as a rule run away when first they discover the hunter, but the moment he stops off they go at a surprising speed. So far I have never seen these graceful creatures drinking, even though I have waited, carefully concealed, near likely water-holes for days at a time. I have never even seen them come near water. They do not, I believe, ever go in large herds, and though I have seen several hundred at various times, the greatest number I have observed together is nine. Dik-dik and duiker were very numerous, but as we did not shoot any I was unable to identify them. Along the dry, sandy river-bed tracks of elephant were fairly abundant, though we saw nothing of the animals themselves. During the early part of the dry season, when there is still a certain amount of water to be found, this, I should imagine,

would be a very good place for elephant. We found both lion and leopard tracks, and heard lion during the night. On the rocky mounds near and in the river-bed hyrax were remarkably numerous. They were so shy that I was not able to secure any photographs of them, but it was amusing to watch them poking their noses above the rocks to satisfy their curiosity. A brief look was usually sufficient, and off they would scuttle, to be immediately lost to view.

Our next stopping-place was Langaia, as dreary a place as I have ever seen. Camp was made on a dry, stony ridge, frightfully hot and without a particle of shade. Every stone that was moved when we pitched our tents revealed one or more small scorpions. Water, of inferior quality, had to be brought from a valley about a mile away. Near this water-hole we spent the afternoon in the hope of having a chance to photograph elephant or other game. Baboon came within sight, but would not come nearer than a hundred and fifty yards; from this distance, sitting on rocky ledges, they made ill-tempered remarks about us; occasionally a little dik-dik would pass by and go farther down the valley to drink. Rhino tracks were fairly numerous leading to and from the water, but we saw nothing of the animals themselves. It was a disappointing afternoon.

Five hours' march brought our outfit the next day to Merile, which is about seventy miles north of the Guaso Nyiro.

The last few miles were thoroughly bad for the motor, the ground being nothing but a mass of rough, volcanic stone, which played havoc with the tyres. Camp was made under the shade of the belt of dom palms which bordered the wide, sandy river. The heat was almost unbearable, for we were now not more than eighteen hundred feet above sea-level. Water was obtained from large, deep holes dug in the river-bed by the Rendile tribe, who brought their vast herds of camels to be watered. These people are very different from any that we had seen south of the Guaso Nyiro : somewhat smaller in size, very thin, intensely black, and resembling to some extent the Abyssinians. Most of the men were entirely naked, while the women wore dirty-looking skirts of leather. Unlike the Kikuyu and Masai, the women have fairly long hair twisted into innumerable fine, string-like plaits, such as one sees in the Eastern Sudan and parts of Abyssinia. They are nomads, and live almost entirely on camel's milk. Their peculiar method of loading the few camels that are used as beasts of burden is the same as that used by the Samburu Masai for loading donkeys : a long, curved pole is fastened on either side of the hump, and in some complicated way all the belongings of the family are attached to this. The belongings consist chiefly of large gourds for water or milk, and sheep or goat skins, which, presumably, are used for bedding. In watering the camels long troughs are made from the trunks of the dom palm, hollowed out to within

a short distance of the ends. These are placed on the ground near the source of supply. The men and women then pass the water up from one to the other in buckets made usually of hide and fill the trough. The camels are brought up in groups of seven or eight or more and allowed to drink. The whole work is carried on in a very systematic way, so that thousands of camels are watered in a remarkably short time. The Merile River (I presume that is the name of the river) has its source in the eastern slopes of the Ol Doinyo Lasoe or Mathew's range of mountains, and flows (that is to say when it does flow, which is only during the rains and for a short time after) into the Guaso Nyiro, about seventy miles west of the Lorian swamp. It is considered a very fine place for elephant, particularly in the vicinity of where we camped. But at this time the Rendile were forced to bring great numbers of camels to drink, as their regular water-holes were dry owing to the extreme drought, and the elephant, consequently, were far less numerous than usual. We saw but few of their tracks and signs of a couple of rhino. Other large game seemed very scarce, but spur-fowl and sand-grouse were seen in great numbers.

News was brought to us that Colonel Llewelyn and other officers of the K.A.R. were expected to pass through Merile, so we decided to wait till they arrived, as they might be able to give us information as to the condition of certain water-holes farther to the east. In the meantime we sent out reliable men

to make inquiries. All the reports proved to be most unsatisfactory. One particularly good water-hole, some fifteen miles away, which was usually visited by very large numbers of game, had dried up completely, and others were rendered useless for our purpose by the presence of the Rendile and their herds.

Under these conditions we concluded that it would be better to follow Colonel Llewelyn's advice and continue on our road northward to Lasarmis, which was only about twelve miles away.

Lasarmis is a watering-place on a short and usually dry river, but there are several good water-holes within a few hundred yards of the trail. Tarlton, Harris and I, starting early, went ahead in the car, and reached our destination by half-past seven. We found the river-bed marked in every direction with the footprints of domestic and wild animals, but unfortunately thousands of Rendile camels, goats, sheep and donkeys occupied the vicinity of each of the water-holes, so the chances of doing any photographic work were none too promising. On investigating the river-bed with a view to building hiding-places, we were surprised to find several already built, evidently the work of Martin Johnson. He had told us that he had tried to photograph in this neighbourhood, but without any success. The reason was only too obvious, as he had made the " blinds " of stones, so that they looked like houses, with roofs of palm

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leaves. They were very comfortable, but were far too conspicuous and artificial in appearance. No self-respecting wild animal could be expected to approach such elaborate structures, at least not until it had become accustomed to seeing them. As these had now become part of the landscape, having been built nearly two months ago, we had every reason to feel that, should the Rendile leave the vicinity, there would be a good chance of our obtaining photographs from Martin Johnson's "blinds," and we felt grateful to him for having built them. Harris and I each selected the "blind" we preferred, and we took our cinema outfit into them and waited patiently for the departure of Rendile. Tarlton awaited the arrival of the porters, and took them to a suitable camping-place out of sight of the water-holes and about a mile away.

It was nearly two o'clock before the last of the camels disappeared over the brow of the hill. In the meantime I had arranged my cameras and made myself as comfortable as conditions would allow. There was nothing more to be done except to wait patiently for whatever might come. My "blind" was on a spur of rock overlooking the bed of the river, which at this point twisted and turned through the curious, yellowish-grey, honeycombed rocks; beyond the sloping bank a hill rose gradually to a height of perhaps seventy-five or a hundred feet. It was rough and stony, very light in colour, with diminutive thorn scrub and an occasional low tree, from the branches of

which hung numerous nests. After I had waited an hour or more several Grévy zebra appeared over the top of the hill. They approached in a most tantalisingly leisurely way, coming forward a few yards, then going back again, as though not at all certain that the place was safe. They were fully two hundred and fifty yards away, and therefore beyond reasonable photographic range. The question was, Would they come while the light was still good? At the present rate of progress it would take them many hours to reach the water. Longer and longer the shadows grew, and the wretched creatures had come but a few yards nearer. Vultures, eagles and spur-fowl, to say nothing of countless doves, came to drink, and farther down the gully, where Harris was hidden, I saw a small herd of Grévy zebra approach the water-hole that he was watching. I envied him his good fortune. It was his first attempt at photographing from a "blind" in Africa, and I could imagine how excited he would be. I was so interested in seeing what was happening to him that for the time I forgot to keep a watch on the zebra nearer to me.

Suddenly the sound of a stone rolling down the bank brought me to my senses. My zebra were only about a hundred yards away, and consequently within range of the camera, which was fitted with a long-focus lens; but just as I began turning the handle of the cinema machine something startled the animals, and away they galloped before I had used more than

a few feet of film. Almost at the same moment I noticed that the small herd below had taken themselves off. The cause of the unfortunate disturbance was a native coming over the hill to get water. By the time he had secured what he wanted the sun had disappeared. There was nothing to be done but to return to camp thoroughly disgusted at our bad luck. But then in work of this sort one must be prepared for disappointments. They are the rule rather than the exception; for one stroke of good luck there are usually a hundred failures from one cause or another. Infinite patience and a philosophical nature are absolutely necessary if good photographs are to be made. The number of days when good luck has been with me I can count almost on my fingers. They stand out with startling and delightful clearness. The bad luck days have been so numerous that I could not reckon them. Strangely enough, it is usually some ridiculously small and trivial thing which makes the difference between good luck and bad, between success and failure.

On the following day we were back at the water-hole and in the hiding-places before sunrise, but before we had settled ourselves and arranged the cameras a cloud of dust was seen rising in the distance. There could be little doubt as to its cause, for wild animals, unless stampeded by fear, seldom stir up much dust. Scarcely had the sun cleared the distant hills on the horizon before great herds of camels came into view.

Had I felt in a different frame of mind and not been thoroughly disgusted at this disturbance I could have taken more pleasure in the picture before me, for it was really very beautiful. The sight of thousands of camels, lit by the orange light of the early sun, slightly blurred by the golden dust, was extraordinarily effective. As they came nearer black and white and brown goats could be distinguished among the dust-coloured camels. Nearer and nearer they came, and still more beautiful was the picture. As far as the eye could see there were camels and yet more camels. I had no idea there were so many in the world, and I longed for my paints so that I might put on canvas at least a suggestion of the unusual scene. The camera could give no idea of the beauty, colour alone could do that, and I had only a small sketch book with me for a subject to do justice to which needed a large canvas.

All day long the water-hole was occupied by the Rendile, and for us the hours passed very slowly. My "blind" was about three hundred yards from where the animals were being watered, so that I did not even have the interest of watching the people and their herds at close quarters. Twice during the afternoon herds of zebra came within sight of the much-needed water, but of course would not come within several hundred yards. Birds there were in plenty, doves of several species, marabou storks, black and white vultures, an occasional eagle, and flocks of sand-grouse and weaver birds; but I wanted

animals, and could not take any real interest in the bird life.

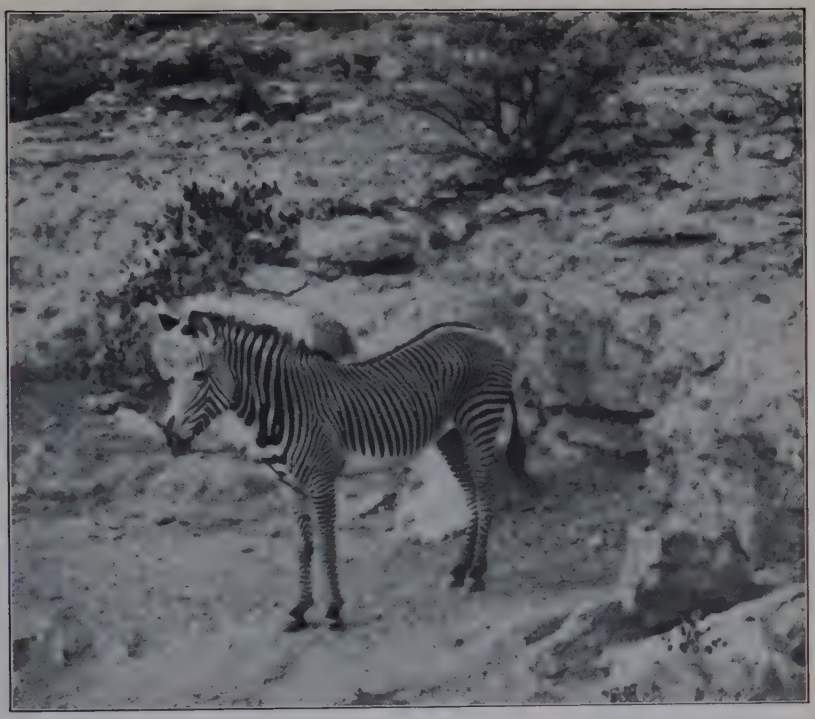
However, I made some films of a flock of marabou which were rather amusing as they marched along in their curious dignified way, like a lot of old men in black coats and white waistcoats. Twice I almost succeeded in getting a picture of hawks, which looked like small falcons, stooping and catching unfortunate doves, but they were too quick for me. When the doves saw the hawks they would immediately dart for the nearest thorn bush, where they seemed to be safe. It was only those that lagged behind that fell prey to the rapid-flying hawk.

Quite late in the afternoon, as the camels were being led away, a single Grévy zebra came just within range of the camera, and shortly after that little bit of mild excitement a family of wart-hog came past my hiding-place: father and mother, followed by five youngsters, all trotting along in a line with tails held absolutely straight up. I managed to expose a short piece of film of this amusing family, even though the sun was shining almost directly into the lens.

Harris was rather depressed at his lack of luck. He believed that Africa was so full of animals that each day at a water-hole would produce thousands of feet of film, and these two days had proved very disappointing to him. The chances of carrying on our work depended entirely on whether the Rendile continued to occupy our chosen place during the daytime. If

they did the wild animals would be forced to drink at night, when we could do nothing.

The following morning saw us ensconced once more in our hiding-places. We reached them just before dawn, only to see the great herds of camel come within half an hour after our arrival. However, they did not stay as long as usual, and by three o'clock in the afternoon we had the place to ourselves. About an hour later we were delighted to see Grévy zebra and oryx in the distance heading towards the water-hole. It was a question whether Harris's hiding-place or mine would be the lucky one, and for a long time I was kept in suspense. At last a single oryx came in my direction. Nearer and nearer he came, until at last I began to turn the handle of the camera; slight as the noise was, the alert animal seemed to hear it, for he stopped and looked about in a suspicious way. Seeing nothing to fear, he then moved along, and I exposed a fairly long piece of film on him walking along against the sky-line, with several tick birds hopping about on his back. For some reason he changed his course, and instead of coming to drink at my particular pool he headed towards Harris. For me this was rather disappointing, as it meant that I should not be able to make any close-up pictures. While watching the retreating oryx, after he had passed out of reach of my camera, I saw him stop suddenly and look back. Wondering whether this meant that he was only the advance guard of a herd (as frequently



"A single Grévy zebra came just within range of the camera"

they send a scout ahead to see that all is safe), I looked back towards the south, and to my great delight saw a giraffe's head appearing above the low trees on the high ground on the opposite side of the river-bed. If only he would come near enough to be photographed! Up to the present I had never had an opportunity of getting pictures of these beautiful creatures except at very long range, and I had spent endless time both in stalking and waiting for them. Filled with excitement, I examined each detail of my camera to see that it was in perfect order. Gradually the giraffe emerged from among the trees and came slowly along the low hill opposite to my "blind." What a magnificent animal he was! A fine bull, standing probably seventeen or eighteen feet in height, beautifully marked with the clearly-defined network pattern of white or very pale buff against the dark chestnut colour of the body. There is certainly no animal more beautiful than the reticulated giraffe.

Slowly he walked with long, easy strides, nearer and nearer, stopping occasionally to examine the country and see that there was no enemy about. At last he was within range of the camera and I began exposing film. Silhouetted against the sky, he presented a picture such as I had often dreamed of making, and now I had my opportunity. In my excitement I wondered whether I was giving the correct exposure and whether I had focused the seventeen-inch lens sharply. I also wondered why the animal continued along the crest of the hill instead of

coming down to the water-hole. He appeared to be interested in something farther ahead, to the right of where Harris was hidden, and a minute or two later, when he had gone beyond the range of my camera, I discovered the reason, for there, directly opposite Harris, were three other giraffe, and with them a herd of Grévy zebra and oryx, all making their way towards the water-hole in front of Harris's blind. What a wonderful opportunity he had ! I felt most envious. Never yet had I seen anything like it. Three kinds of animals and innumerable birds, and the light still good; in fact, the low sun made the picture more beautiful than it would have been earlier in the day when the vertical sun gave no long shadows.

While I was watching the mixed herd and wondering how everything was going with Harris a slight sound again attracted my attention. Three Grévy zebra appeared over the rise of the hill. As a rule animals approach a water-hole very slowly, stopping frequently to scrutinise the surroundings with the utmost care; they seem to be painfully suspicious of danger near watering-places. Why I have never been able to understand. Lions are their greatest and most constant enemies, and yet I have never been able to discover any evidence of their attacking other animals at water-holes. Natives may do so, though I am not at all sure of it, except in the case of the very few who are allowed to have possession of fire-arms. No white man who has any idea of sport would lie in wait for animals

From a Cinema Film.

Three phases of a giraffe's step

coming to drink, for to do so would be to violate every idea of sportsmanship. But whatever may be the reason, nearly all animals show extraordinary caution when approaching a water-hole. I have even seen them stand for hours on a hill which commanded a good view before venturing near, and if there was the slightest suspicion they would go away without the much-needed drink. The three zebra that were coming towards me, seeing all the other animals congregated only a few hundred yards away, felt that there was no need to be afraid, so they came on with scarcely any hesitation until they were within a short distance of the water-hole nearest to me. To approach this they had to come down some steep rocks, and for some time they hesitated before making the descent, for once down in the narrow bed of the river any enemy could approach them unseen. At last one after the other they jumped down from rock to rock with graceful ease, and reached the gravel bottom. They were then only about fifty yards away, and I had a splendid opportunity, not only of photographing them, but of observing their wonderful beauty. In every way they are finer than their cousins, the common Grant's zebra. Much larger, they stand about fourteen hands and a half; they are more gracefully built, with very narrow stripes which do not go under the body. The pattern divides on the back over the hips, while with the common zebra the division is in the middle of the back. In proportion to the size of the body their

heads are very long, and the ears large and rounded. I have only found them north of the Equator. Their range, which is very limited, probably does not extend quite as far west as the 37th degree of longitude; roughly speaking, it is much the same as that of the reticulated giraffe, though perhaps it does not reach so far west. Strangely enough, both Grant's and Grévy's zebra are found together in certain regions near the Guaso Nyiro, both north and south of the river. The two species are not as closely allied as their appearance would lead the casual observer to believe, and no instance of interbreeding of the two has been recorded, so far as I know.

The three zebra that I was photographing proved extremely good models, and they posed for me surprisingly well. The low sunlight was just what I wanted, and enabled me to secure the most interesting pictures I have ever made of these beautiful creatures. Unfortunately, they chose the wrong side of the water-hole when drinking, and were hidden from the camera by some overhanging rocks. For a long time they remained almost entirely out of sight, and when they re-appeared the sun had set and no more photographs could be made, so I packed up the cameras and rejoined Harris, who was wildly excited at his good luck. He had made film of the herds in which all three species, giraffe, zebra and oryx, were together, and part of the film showed a giraffe drinking within such short range that the animal occupied the entire size of the film while its head was

From a painting by the Author

Visitors at a water-hole in Kenya. Reticulated giraffe, Grévy and Grant's zebra, oryx and Grant's gazelle

down, when its head was raised it went out of the picture. We were both delighted with the afternoon's work, and decided to spend three more days at Lasarmis before moving northward.

The next day Harris occupied the "blind" that I had used and I used his, but owing to the natives and their camels we had very little luck. Harris succeeded in photographing a pair of oryx, while I saw no animals. Almost the only interesting event of the long day's watch was a visit to the water-hole of a great bustard. I had never before seen one drinking, and as I watched the handsome bird walking to the shallow water-hole within about thirty yards of my hiding-place I realised that I was going to secure an unusual picture. The bird was almost as suspicious as an animal might have been, and stood for some time on the edge of the pool, looking about in every direction. He then sat down on his heels and began drinking, not a few sips, such as most birds indulge in, but a series of long sips which lasted altogether half an hour. The film I secured of this is, I believe, the first record, photographic or otherwise, of the bustard's method of drinking. Perhaps I may be wrong, but from my own observations I believe that they very seldom come to water-holes because they require drink only at long intervals. It is possible, of course, that they get the necessary water from the dew-laden grass. In this particular instance we were in a part of the country where there was no dew at the time, and this may account for the

bird's unusual thirst. It may be mentioned that this bird, a male, was in full mating plumage, and at times, when walking, the long, finely-pointed, delicately-pencilled feathers of the neck were puffed out; at the same time the feathers forming the crest on the head were slightly raised, and the bird looked particularly handsome as he strutted about. Unfortunately, he was then out of range of the camera, so that it was not possible to make any photographs.

To me the monotony of the long day's vigil had been relieved by the bustard, but Harris was discouraged, and when some lions serenaded us during the evening he decided to go off with Tarlton the following morning on the chance of shooting one. The desire to kill a lion is strong in most sportsmen, especially on their first visit to Africa. I spent a very dreary day in the "blind." The heat was intense, and I was tired of watching the ceaseless bailing of water for the grunting camels. Several times both oryx and zebra came to see if the water-hole was clear. They would stand about on the hills, seven or eight hundred yards away, and after watching the water-hole and the endless herds of camels and goats, would turn away as though in disgust, to appear again perhaps an hour or two later, with the same result. All of which was most discouraging, and ended in a completely wasted day.

On returning to camp after sunset I found Harris and Tarlton had had no luck. They had seen no lion and very

little other game. An unsuccessful attempt had been made to stalk and photograph a gerenuk, and Harris had come to the conclusion that stalking game with a heavy cinema camera had little to recommend it.

It is very rarely that wild animals can satisfactorily be photographed except from a hiding-place. This is particularly true of all the smaller animals. Rhinoceros and elephant are different, because, owing to the size of the creatures, it is not necessary to approach to within such close range; and the eyesight of these is so poor that, with reasonable care, one can escape observation if the wind is in the right direction. The smaller the animal the more difficult it is to obtain good photographs, for it means getting within extremely short distance, when of course the least movement or sound causes alarm. Of the larger animals giraffe and buffalo have probably the keenest eyesight. Giraffe can distinguish a man fully half a mile away, and their heads being so far above the lower bushes or scrub, they have every advantage. The buffalo has almost equally good eyesight, and a far keener sense of smell, so that he, too, is difficult to approach unobserved.

Anyone hearing that photographs are made from a hiding-place or "blind" concludes that the task is an easy one and requires no special knowledge. As a matter of fact it is a highly-specialised branch of work. Chance pictures may be made by those who go at it in a haphazard way, but the greater the

knowledge of the habits of the animals the better will be the chance of success. There is, first of all, the question of where to arrange the "blind"; there must be a very definite reason to bring the animals to any particular place. The country is large, and there are so many places to which they *may* come. A water-hole is usually the most certain attraction. Salt licks are good; resting and feeding-places very uncertain. Having found a suitable water-hole, a careful study of the surrounding country is necessary to see from which direction the animals are in the habit of coming. Then a study of the wind; this sounds easy, but on it everything finally depends. The wind must blow your scent away from the water-hole *and* from its approaches. Usually the early morning breeze comes from a different direction than the day wind, the change taking place, as a rule, after a short period of calm between eight and ten o'clock, and this, curiously enough, is frequently the very time when the animals decide to come for a drink.

Before the rainy season is, of course, the best period for water-hole work, as the country (according to the district) is then more or less dry. In some localities the animals appear to drink only at night or at the first glimpse of dawn; this is one of the things that must be ascertained before deciding on a situation, otherwise a lot of time will be wasted.

Having found the desirable water-hole or salt lick and found out how the wind blows, the next thing is to choose a

site for the "blind," a site that commands a clear view and gives a satisfactory composition for the prospective picture. If possible, a thick, overhanging bush should be utilised. By cutting away the inside and adding branches, a suitable screen can be made without making a conspicuous mark in the landscape. If there is no bush, the trunk of a tree will prove useful, not only as a support for the branches forming the necessary screen, but also for shade, and shade is most desirable. Sitting day after day in a hot "blind," without adequate protection from the fierce heat of the sun, is not advisable. If there is neither tree nor bush nor a convenient rock, then a framework of poles must be erected and these covered with grass or branches. Such a hiding-place is seldom good until it has been in position for several days, as the animals are quick to notice any marked change in the surroundings.

The structure having been built, proper peep-holes must be made, so that the cameras may be arranged with a clear field of view, and swung without touching any obstructions. Nothing is more aggravating than to find when the game arrives that you cannot swing the camera far enough round to make the picture. There must be peep-holes not only in front, but also at the side and back; these should be very small, just large enough to enable one to keep an eye on the surroundings in case of rhinoceros or buffalo or even lion coming, a thing that has happened to me with almost serious consequences.

Great care must be taken that the animals cannot see one's figure silhouetted against the sky or any light background. To make sure of this it is well to examine the " blind " from the place where the animals would see it. Small screens of tufts of grass or leaves should be placed around the lens (but without interfering with it) in order to conceal both the apparatus and the hands which turn the handle of the cinema camera and operate the focusing devices or panoraming lever.

Silence is one of the greatest essentials in this work; animals have very keen ears and hear the slightest sound, so everything must be arranged with this in mind. I place a blanket on top of a bed of grass, if any is obtainable, and all parts of the outfit that may be required are laid in a convenient position on the blanket. If the ground is stony I even wear soft buckskin moccasins while in the " blind." In most places where I expect to work, if I am not quite sure of the wind or if the question of light makes it necessary, I build two or more hiding-places, so that one may be occupied whichever way the wind blows. Needless to say, moving from one " blind " to another must be done with due caution, for it always happens, by that curious waywardness of things connected with animal photography, that when, after perhaps hours of waiting and watching without the sign of any creature approaching, one puts one's head outside the hiding-place, some animal will be certain to appear at that very moment. It is therefore advisable to examine the

Two examples of "blinds" or hiding-places. The upper picture shows the lenses exposed to show position, the — indicates lenses in the lower picture

surrounding country with the utmost care with field-glasses, of course, before venturing out.

All preparations, such as building "blinds," should, if possible, be done on the previous day, so that the scent left by the builder will have gone; the slightest suspicion of human scent will make the animals frightened. Moreover, a "blind" made in a hurry is seldom satisfactory. I prefer to make my hiding-places complete early on the day before I occupy them, even the tripods should be placed in position and the free swing of the cameras tested. Then, on the following morning, I go into the "blind," if possible before sunrise, so that the camera bearers may leave the vicinity and return to camp before the animals begin to move. All these precautions may sound absurd, but experience has taught me that they are necessary. It is impossible to say at what hour of the day animals will come to drink, it depends both on the species and on the locality. In some places the early morning and late afternoon are the best times, at others I have found midday to be best. There is no rule about it. Where animals are much hunted they may drink only at night, at dawn or very late in the day. This is particularly true of rhino. In fact, I have never had the good luck to see one drinking by daylight since my first visit to Kenya in 1908.

To return once more to our trip. Time was passing, and if there was to be any chance for doing much at Marsabit we

ought to be getting there without further delay, otherwise the rainy season would commence, and this would mean, not only that the elephant would leave the forest country and take to the plains, but that we might experience serious difficulty in getting the car across the Guaso Nyiro. We therefore decided to make a start on the following day (March 8th).

Before us lay a stretch of desert, flat, sandy and intensely hot; water would be very scarce, if not unobtainable, so Duggand, who knew the country, advised us to send the porters on early in the afternoon, he starting at noon with the oxen and carrying a supply of water, while we in the car need not leave till after dark. This would give us another clear day at Lasarmis. We were up at four o'clock, and after packing our things Harris and I went to the "blinds" before daylight. With the first grey of the early dawn I was able to distinguish animals moving about in the dim light. For some time it was impossible to make out what they were, but as the light increased they proved to be a herd of oryx. When the sun appeared over the distant hills it flooded the country with a wonderful golden glow, in the midst of which the animals seemed like phantom creatures, scarcely defined in the sunlit dust, which they disturbed as they played. As a picture it was almost unreal in its beauty, but as ill-luck would have it, the animals themselves were directly between me and the sun, and the light streaming into the lens made it quite impossible to make photographs.

Had I been but thirty or forty yards to one side or the other all would have been well, and since the animals were only seventy yards or so away, I could have made a film of rare beauty.

There is something particularly fine about the oryx. Though not by any means the most graceful of the antelope, they make up for it by their vigorous build, their curious, soft, warm, dove-grey colour, with the relief of the strongly-defined, black markings on the face, side and legs, and by their remarkable, rapier-like horns, so long, straight and finely-pointed. As I watched the oryx playing I was struck by the curious fact that they indulged in regular games. There was a small water-hole around which thorn branches had been placed, and the oryx went round and round this like animals at a circus ; every once in a while the leader would break away, whereupon the others would follow and try to catch him, twisting and turning about just as dogs do when playing. If only the sun had been a little higher so as to clear the lens, what an interesting film could have been procured ! As it was, an attempt was made, but with only fairly satisfactory results.

A Grévy zebra joined the party about this time, and I prayed that nothing would come to disturb the scene before the sun had climbed higher into the clear, cloudless sky. Of course, the inevitable happened : a pair of natives came along the road and frightened the herd, and off they went. It was a great disappointment, but only what might have been expected at

a place directly on a road. The critic may ask why such a place was chosen for photographic work. The answer is only too obvious. Caravan roads lie, naturally, from water to water, and there was not another water-hole within many miles of Lasarmis ; so there was no choice in the matter.

The pair of unwelcome natives, having successfully spoilt my chance for making pictures of the oryx, took a drink, filled their water-gourds and moved on. A little later I was surprised to see a jackal coming down the river-bed. Jackals are chiefly night prowlers, and I had only once before seen one visiting a water-hole during the daytime. It was most interesting to observe the curious, nervous way in which the little creature moved along. Never have I seen such nervousness displayed by any animal : a few steps, then a stop, again a few steps and he would start violently. Even the sound of a bird flying past would frighten the timid thing.

Why should there be this distressing timidity, as though the poor jackal were haunted by some ever-present spectre ? Their enemies are not numerous ; even by man they are not, as a rule, molested, and I scarcely believe the various cats take the trouble to hunt them. Had this jackal known of my presence there might have been reason for his nervous fear, but that he was entirely ignorant of my whereabouts was proved by the fact that, after wandering about for some time just out of good range of the camera, he headed towards me—

very much to my delight. Closer and closer he came, then suddenly, just as I was about to start the camera, he took fright and bolted directly past my "blind." Of course, I thought he had gone for good, and regretted that I had not used the camera sooner. At this moment a spotted hyena appeared on the hill, about a hundred and fifty yards away. My entire attention was devoted to this new visitor, and I hoped he would come within range of my camera, when suddenly the silent-footed jackal re-appeared, not more than seven or eight feet from me. He had come up wind, and apparently had paid no attention to the scent of man. I was rather at a loss as to what to do. To make the least move would have been fatal, as the slightest sound would have revealed my presence, so I waited until he had gone perhaps twenty feet away, and then, with the utmost care, I turned the camera towards him, focused carefully, and commenced turning the handle slowly so that there should be no sudden noise. In a few seconds I was turning at normal speed, but the noise even of my almost silent camera caused the little fellow to stop and turn round, first one way and then another, as though trying to locate the strange sound. I had never before realised the beauty of the jackal's colouring; the soft shades of silver and greenish-greys were surprisingly fine, and I regretted that these could not be reproduced by the camera. However, I managed to expose a short piece of film of the little creature at close quarters, which

proved to be most satisfactory, and then, as he moved away, I continued photographing as long as he was within range. In the meantime the hyena had vanished.

During the rest of the morning my only visitors were birds: vultures, both the black ones with red heads and the black and white ones; marabou storks; innumerable doves of several kinds, from tiny ground doves to the large rock pigeons; crows; small flocks of weaver birds, and once a flock of guinea fowl. Of these, I succeeded in taking some more or less interesting film.

Towards noon things became very quiet, and until about three o'clock I had nothing to do but to sit still and keep a watch. A pair of oryx then arrived, after a lot of preliminary scouting. For nearly an hour they stayed within range, sometimes coming as close as thirty yards, but usually remaining about sixty to eighty yards away. I had ample opportunity of exposing film, and made some very satisfactory pictures of the pair. Scarcely had they gone when a family of wart-hogs arrived. Strangely enough I did not see them approach, and the first sight I had of them was when they were within a few feet of my hiding-place. The fact that they came up wind makes me believe that the animals are far less afraid of the scent of man in a place much frequented by human beings than in more remote places. Usually wart-hogs are extremely wild and difficult to approach, so I was delighted to see the whole family at such unusually

close range. The old boar had only fairly long tusks, the sow still shorter ones, the five youngsters were about two-thirds grown. Altogether an interesting family. And they behaved remarkably well. They visited the nearest water-hole, and I secured a film of them all drinking at once, a quite unusual picture.

While the wart-hogs were still in sight I noticed a fine Grévy zebra a long way off on the opposite hill. At first it looked as though he would go within range of Harris' hiding-place, but after a time he changed his mind and came very slowly, aggravatingly slowly indeed, towards my "blind." Presumably I was about to have a splendid chance of photographing the handsome creature at close range. When he was still about one hundred and twenty-five yards away he stopped and looked suspiciously in my direction. Then, apparently having seen something that he did not like, he moved back a few yards. I was completely at a loss to account for this behaviour, and it looked as though there must be some natives coming from behind me. Moving carefully, I looked out of one of my observation openings. What I saw was certainly a surprise. Not more than fifteen yards away was an askari in khaki uniform, lying flat behind a large stone on which his rifle rested. Evidently he was waiting for the zebra to come within easy shooting range. Natives, except in unusual cases, are forbidden to shoot game in Kenya. For a moment I thought I would give the rascal a severe fright by firing a shot at the barrel of his rifle,

but I feared that the sound would disturb any game that might be lingering in the neighbourhood, so, instead of shooting, I suddenly shouted out an assorted variety of English and Swahili at the top of my voice. The effect was most amusing. The wretched fellow nearly turned inside out at the unexpected sound of a white man's voice, as he believed himself to be absolutely alone. To say that he vanished scarcely describes the fact. Without even taking a look in my direction, and scarcely waiting to grab hold of his rifle, he was off like a shot, leaving a trail of white dust to mark his departure. I was sorely tempted to put a shot behind him, in the *earth* of course, just to see if he could be made to go still faster. It appeared that Harris had seen the fellow crawling up to the rock, and had felt the same temptation that I had to frighten the life out of him by firing a shot close to where he lay. This occurrence proved a serious interruption, for the single zebra was only the advance guard of a large herd of both zebra and oryx which had been waiting in the scrub beyond Harris's "blind" for the signal that all was safe before coming to drink. I have since regretted that I did not take that black rascal and hand him over to the authorities. There is little doubt, however, that he received a severe shock, and that he will be somewhat careful when next he thinks of shooting at Lasarmis.

At sunset Tarlton arrived with the car, so we packed our outfit and sat down in the cool of the evening to a much relished

meal. Twilight merged gradually into the soft, mysterious light of the half-grown tropical moon by the time we had finished our meal. Suddenly the stillness was broken by the curious, petulant snort of a rhino. Leaving the car, we made our way carefully down to the river-bed, and there, standing on the light-coloured gravel, was the dark, bulky figure of a large rhino; we approached to within about fifty yards before the light, shifty breeze carried our scent to him, and he did not like it. Without waiting for further evidence of the presence of his supposed enemy, the queer old beast made off as fast as his short legs could carry him. It was a pity he had not come while there was yet daylight, as he would have made a splendid picture standing there in the dry river-bed. He had probably learned by sad experience that this was a dangerous locality, and therefore waited until the kindly gloom of night afforded some protection from his persistent enemy, man. So long as rhino horns are allowed to be sold or exported the wretched beasts have little chance of surviving, for they are so stupid that anyone can stalk and shoot them, except in the thick forest country, where man usually considers discretion to be the better part of valour, and leaves them alone. The horns command a high price, and are chiefly sent to China, where they are used, so I am told, for medicinal purposes.

One feature of the country at Lasarmis struck me as peculiar. On the hill to the north of the river-bed there were

a great number of mounds composed entirely of small volcanic stones. Some of these mounds were, perhaps, ten feet in height and twenty feet or more in diameter, others were very much smaller. No one seems to have any idea as to their origin. Apparently they are the work of human hands, but for what purpose it is difficult to see. People in this land do not indulge in unnecessary work, and yet these mounds, unless perhaps they mark graves, appear to serve no definite purpose.

About half-past seven we loaded up the car with our cameras and as much water as we could carry and once more started northward. Our stay at Lasarmis, though disappointing in many respects, had been, on the whole, satisfactory, and I felt that we ought to be well pleased with what we had obtained. Shortly after midnight we came to where the men had encamped, twenty-four miles from Lasarmis. Near the camp was the bed of a large dry pool. During the rains and for a short time afterwards this pool contains water, and, strangely enough, fish can be found buried deep in the slightly-damp soil, alive, even though several months had elapsed since the pond had dried up.

We had still a good seven hours' march before reaching Ret, the next water-hole, so we made a very early start in order to avoid the terrific heat of the midday sun in this desert. It was shortly before noon when the porters arrived, only to find that the water was about two miles away from the trail. I was sorry for the men, who had this long trip for water when they

were tired after the hard, hot march; they had been on the move, with the exception of the few hours for sleep, since early in the afternoon of the previous day. However, the worst was over. Another day's journey would take us from the low, hot desert, which was only about seventeen hundred feet above sea-level, up to the cool, shady forests of Marsabit, which ranged in height from four to over five thousand feet.

The last part of the way from the desert to Ret was the first bad road we had encountered, except for a few brief stretches near Merile and Lasarmis over volcanic stone, and a new tyre went to pieces before we had covered more than a few miles. Near our camp we found the remains of a letter-carrier's outfit. The poor chap had gone to sleep without taking the precaution of building a fire, and had been carried off by a lion. Our porters did not require to be told to get firewood at Ret. The following morning Duggand arrived before sunrise with his oxen, which had been travelling all night. By doing this he avoided the intense heat, and the oxen had a chance to graze and sleep during the day; at night, owing to the danger of lions, oxen are not allowed to wander about, but are brought into where big fires are kept burning, and, if possible, a zareba or boma of thorn bush is built round them.

CHAPTER V

MARSABIT—INTERESTING EXPERIENCES WITH ELEPHANTS

AS soon as the tents were struck the porters started on the last march before reaching our destination, and we followed a little later after a new tyre had been put on the car. The road, considering the hilly nature of the country, was fairly good, except in one place where jagged rocks made the going very bad and put a severe strain on the tyres. After fourteen miles' run, which took about an hour and a half, we left the road and drove a mile across country to the place where the car was to be left, and where the oxen and our main supplies would remain during our stay in the forest. Tarlton and Harris went ahead on foot with an old guide that Duggand had found, to find a suitable site for our camp; while I remained with the car, in case some prowling hyena might take it into his head to try to make a meal of the tyres.

The country was remarkably beautiful, and a great relief after the dreary, sandy, scrub-covered desert that had been our home for the past two weeks. Rolling, grassy hills stretched out to the west, and to the north there were abrupt mountains, clothed in parts with dense green forest with great stretches

of gold-coloured grass in between. Water-courses, strewn with huge boulders and bordered by trees, made their snake-like way from the high land. As this was nearing the end of the dry season the streams were dry except for pools of muddy water, which were constantly occupied by the Boran cattle. As will be seen later, these cattle were destined to play a very unsatisfactory part in our plans.

The porters, carrying tents and equipment, arrived about the same time that Harris and Tarlton returned with the good news that we were to camp a mile and a half away in the most perfect place they had ever seen, and that signs of elephant were abundant. An hour later we arrived at this paradise on earth. We had at last reached our destination, Marsabit, the last place for water before the northern frontier is reached. Here we were, far from the haunts of the white man, on this strange mountain which rises from the limitless plains, lava-strewn and dotted with scrubby, ill-nourished thorn trees. Formerly Marsabit mountain was a series of volcanoes, but to-day it is clothed with wonderful forests, with lakes where the lava boiled in the days of long ago. Tiny streams trickle through deep-shadowed gullies made by the molten lava which used to creep down the steep slopes like some devouring monster. In this mountain fastness the mighty African elephant lives during that part of the year when the rains do not fall and the deserts are burnt by the relentless sun.

In these dark forests, where the great trees are festooned with pale, grey-green moss and tough, snake-like creepers, where baboons roam in countless numbers, wakening the echoes of the mountain by their howls and screeches, the elephant lives his curious, well-ordered life ; all that he requires is there, food is unlimited. If he pulls down a branch, leaf-covered and succulent, seeds fall and he tramples them into the soft, loamy ground, from which in the shadowed damp they spring into life, and soon become trees which will furnish food for the elephant of to-morrow. In the glades among the trees grass grows luxuriantly and reaches a height of two or three feet, so that the elephant, without going far from the forest, can have a change of diet.

The crater lakes are suitable bathing-places for the forest monsters, or should they prefer privacy there are many pools with clear, cold water and muddy bottoms in which to wallow when the heat of the vertical sun makes their skin hard and irritable. On the sunny hill-sides, where the rains and the falling trees have torn great gashes in the surface, there are suitable places for dust baths, and the dust being bright red, the elephants appear as though strangely painted.

It was in this wonderland that we made our camp. We had come, not to kill, but to hunt the elephant with the harmless cinema camera, so that we might transplant the animals and the glorious scenery of their home to our northern land, and

"Marsabit mountain is clothed with wonderful forests"

by the magic of the camera show those who have not the opportunity to travel something of the beauty and wonder of this tiny bit of Africa. The camp was hidden away near the edge of giant, moss-covered wild olive trees. No more perfect place could be found if one searched the world over. The ground was more or less clear of undergrowth, and the elephants supplied us with the necessary firewood, for the forest was strewn with the branches which they had torn down to eat the leaves and tender branches.

Clear, ice-cold water bubbled out of the earth inside the slopes of the walls of a wonderful crater near the camp, and the soft, water-soaked earth around the spring was deeply indented by the hoofs of many buffalo, while here and there the incredibly large circular impression made by the elephant proved that he too appreciated the limpid water of the spring. Only a few feet from the water stood several giant fig-trees with their grotesque roots hanging like distorted creatures from the branches, forming in some places great supporting columns many feet in diameter. These trees, with their clusters of fig-like fruit, were a favourite place for the baboons to assemble for drink and food. The spring itself was the rendezvous for countless thousands of small birds of many kinds, chiefly finches and the tiniest of doves, some of which were scarcely larger than sparrows. What more wonderful source for a water supply could be desired? It was unreal in its beauty and amazing in its interest.

Not far from the camp, on the other side, there was a gully, which during the rains would be a mountain torrent; but now the country had known no rain for many, many months, and the torrent was represented by a pool here and there. These pools were the delight of the elephant. In places the walls of the gully were steep and rocky and carpeted with a matted tangle of vegetation; in other places the forest hid the more gradual slopes, while here and there stretches of golden grass shone bright against the sombre background of the forest. Everywhere, even on the steepest cliffs, was a veritable network of well-defined elephant paths, all leading eventually to the pools of cool water. This gully promised well, for not only was it much frequented by the animals we sought, but, look which way one would, the backgrounds were beautiful. All that remained for us to do was to select suitable positions for "blinds." This may sound easy to the uninitiated; in reality it was extremely difficult. So many things had to be considered. First and most important was the question of where the elephant would be likely to come; this could only be judged by examining the tracks.

Next in importance was the finding of a position that would be down wind and at the same time would afford a good view with suitable light and background. And, finally, there was the question of safety to be considered, and that was a most puzzling question. What would be a safe place for ordinary,

"Giant fig-trees with their grotesque roots hanging like distorted creatures from the branches"

more or less dangerous animals might be entirely useless against elephant, whose agility, strength and cunning are beyond belief.

Harris was as keen as I was to secure good films, and together we examined the possibilities of the donga or gully. There seemed to be some sound objection to every place we looked at, and I must confess that the questions of safety were by far the most numerous of the objections. When elephants are to be dealt with the good old " Safety First " sign is most appealing. We *thought* so at the time, and later on we were sure of it. At least, I was; of course, I do not know what Harris actually thought. He had never been to Africa before. I had made two trips, but had had very little to do with " my lord the elephant "; but, as luck would have it, I was not long in overcoming this deficiency.

After careful searching we came to a beautiful little glade two or three hundred yards long and about half as wide. In this were several pools which were well trampled by the big beasts, and two or three much-used dusting places. On the north side the bank sloped steeply for several hundred feet, and was, for the most part, covered with tangled vines and scrub, and bordered by the forest. Against a steep rock in the midst of the more open part, perhaps a hundred feet above the glade, Harris decided to build his " blind." While it offered a good view, it would mean looking down on the animals, and I considered this a great disadvantage from the pictorial

point of view, so I chose the opposite side, where the hill sloped very gradually, and where, for a couple of hundred yards back from the edge, the forest was not very dense. My chief thought was for the view I should get if the elephants happened to come. The wind seemed to blow more or less down the gully from the west, so I selected a spot toward the lower or eastern end. Two large trees (which in my hurry I did not examine very carefully) formed the necessary support for the front of my " blind," and across these, with the help of my carriers, I placed a stout branch, against which a fairly solid screen of thick foliage was arranged with a suitable opening for the camera. At the back, where the bank rose slightly, a few branches were somewhat carelessly thrown to hide me in case any animals came in that direction. To this day I do not know why I considered it unlikely that they would select this particular direction to approach the gully, especially as I had built the " blind " directly on one of their much-used paths. In believing so implicitly that they would come the way I *wanted* them to come I simply proved myself at once an optimist and a fool.

Both of our " blinds " were completed by about sunset, and the following morning at daylight we took possession of them, armed with the full outfit of cameras and rifles, to say nothing of hopefulness and food. The day passed with painful slowness, and though towards the late afternoon we heard our

much-wanted elephants tearing down branches only a few hundred yards away, we returned to camp without having seen anything more interesting than a few baboons, and even these did not approach within photographic range. It was disappointing, but then blank days are the rule rather than the exception, and anyone who is easily discouraged by them should give up wild animal photography.

The following morning, while the forest was still veiled in the cold mountain mist, we started for the "blinds." Leslie Tarlton accompanied Harris. The morning passed without incident, and at noon Tarlton and Harris got tired of waiting, and decided to go farther up the gully to where there was a really beautiful pool, overhung by a large terraced rock. This afforded a perfect place for a "blind," absolutely safe and commanding an uninterrupted view of the pool. That elephant had visited this place was amply proved by the numerous tracks, but they did not appear fresh enough to excite me, so I returned to my first love and settled down for a patient, lonely wait; but not for long was I lonely. A large troop of baboons appeared, and for a couple of hours afforded me great amusement by their antics. Some of the trees opposite my "blind" contained fruit which was evidently very much to the taste of the monkeys, if one could judge by the incessant fighting and squabbling that went on. I was surprised at the wonderful agility of the heavy creatures. With the greatest ease they would climb to the ends of slender branches and sit there while

they devoured the orange-coloured fruit, then jump with unfailing accuracy to other branches.

I sat absolutely still watching their antics, until, my legs becoming stiff, I made a slight change in my position. The result was instantaneous : a terrific screech rent the air and gave me a most unpleasant start. It appeared that one of the baboon scouts had become suspicious of my " blind," and had climbed silently up to the topmost branches of the tree directly overhead. So long as I sat still the sharp-eyed creature was unable to decide whether or not I was a human being, but when I moved he came rapidly to the conclusion that there was something wrong about me, and he promptly gave the call of alarm. Instantly every one of the large troop dropped with startling rapidity to the ground, slithering down vines and tree trunks with unbelievable speed. For some reason they seem to feel safer on the ground than when in the trees, where there is always a possibility of being cut off from their companions, and that, to such gregarious animals, is a calamity.

My scouting friend, having started a panic, seemed quite content to sit quietly on his high perch and watch the results. Apparently, in a very human way, he had started trouble, and the results amused him. He also decided that I needed watching ; I might be dangerous. So he arranged himself where a stout branch concealed his body, and I could only see his eyes. For nearly an hour neither of us moved, and during this time the rest of the troop resumed their feeding and fighting, with the

exception of seven or eight of the senior male members, who took up commanding positions in the open. Some of the younger ones, being filled with curiosity, worked their way from branch to branch until they could see me. They rather reminded me of a certain sergeant-major that I ran up against in 1914, who delighted in shouting at unfortunate recruits, always hoping that they would dare to answer him. If they were foolish enough to do so, the fun began and also the language. So it was with these baboons. They would come as near as they dared, and then one after another they began a regular torrent of abuse in the most vigorous monkey language, at the same time shaking the branches exactly as the monkeys shake the bars of their cages in the Zoo. But as I paid no visible attention, they soon got tired of that form of amusement and went off in search of something to eat. The scout vanished in a mysterious way as silently as he had come, and before long I was again left in solitude, and the screeching and fighting noises gradually died away as the troop of ill-tempered creatures moved off, and once more the world about me was silent.

About five o'clock, when the sun was sinking low and casting long shadows across the grassy glade, a crackling of branches disturbed the wonderful forest silence. The sound was directly behind me, and I listened intently. That the noise was made by elephants there could be little doubt, for neither buffalo nor rhino break branches, and none of the other animals make any noise as they make their way through even the densest

of forest. If elephants were approaching from behind me there was every possibility of trouble, as they were almost sure to get wind of me, and even if they did not, they might come along the path on which my "blind" had been so foolishly placed, and the results were not exactly pleasant to contemplate. Instinctively I examined my ·318 rifle to see that it was ready for work. The sound of the approaching monsters became louder and louder, and I could see the shaking of the trees in their vicinity. There was no longer the least doubt as to the nature of my visitors. Neither was there any doubt that they were headed directly towards me. My feelings may be better imagined than described, and I confess that I was very thoroughly frightened. Of course, there was still time for me to get away, but then what about the photographs? To move might mean losing a splendid opportunity of securing an interesting film, and anyhow, the animals might perhaps change their course; there were many deviations from the path which led to my "blind."

Louder and yet louder came the crackling sounds, and at last I caught sight of a great reddish back and a large, flapping ear. Then suddenly there was a silence which was almost terrible in its intensity, and yet the back moved, and I saw a long, snake-like trunk raised high above the body, then another and yet several more; how many I did not count. Slowly and silently the monster bodies were moving towards me, and I trembled at the thought of what might happen within the next few minutes.

On they came, relentlessly it seemed to me, and that they made not the slightest sound proved that their suspicions were thoroughly aroused. How such gigantic creatures can move through the tangled undergrowth so noiselessly is a mystery. I had frequently heard of it, but had always believed the reports to be greatly exaggerated. That they were only too true I now realised. The herd soon came into more or less clear view. How many there were I am not sure, nine or ten, I think, but I was not so much interested in the number as in the discovery that there was a baby among them, and I knew only too well that this added enormously to the chances of trouble. When about twenty-five or thirty yards away the herd stopped, and, forming up in a half circle with the baby inside the line, stayed absolutely still for a few minutes (or was it years ?) ; then one after another they raised their trunks and slowly flapped their great ears. They were employing their two most acute senses : scent and hearing—for they do not depend very much on their eyesight, which is extraordinarily poor. Those long supple trunks waving about seemed like the tentacles of some mighty monster searching for me with horrible design ; but the worst was yet to come. Twenty-five yards offered at least some slight margin of safety, but it was not to last, for gradually several of the herd, including the largest cow and her baby, came forward, while the others worked to either side. Evidently I was to be hemmed in, and escape made impossible. Truly a cheerful prospect ! For a moment I wondered whether it would not be

a good plan to fire a shot; to have done so would certainly have produced a result, a very decided one, in fact, but what would that result be? As it might be disastrous I decided not to take the risk.

Slowly the great reddish bodies moved, a step at a time, with a moment of hesitation between each step; would they [illegible] change their direction? Apparently not, as five or six were directly head on and the continual flapping of their ears was the only sound of which I was conscious; nearer and still nearer they came; in a moment I would be trampled into the soft earth, for there was nothing between us but a couple of leaf-covered branches that could have been knocked down by a child. In my anxiety to be as inconspicuous as possible I crouched down lower and lower, till my head was within a few inches of the ground, and as the elephant came on they appeared like mountains towering above me. And they stopped at last, when the nearest one was exactly *eight feet away* (we measured the distance afterwards). Strangely enough, I looked at my watch and saw that it was just a quarter past five. In about half an hour the sunlight would have left the glade and it would then be too late to do any photography, and I wondered whether the elephant would come out in the open in time to be photographed.

This thought flashed through my mind as I noticed the time. For nearly fifteen long, long minutes those great beasts stood almost touching me; their trunks were actually *over* my head; that probably was the reason they did not get my

scent. I was actually fanned by the monstrous ears, and I could distinctly hear the internal rumblings of their digestive organs, and could see their tiny eyes and their rough, corrugated, wrinkled skin. What I went through during those fifteen minutes no one can guess, and when, from sheer nervousness, I was seized with a violent desire to cough, it seemed that the end must be very near, and I cursed myself for not taking Tarlton's advice when he said that I had selected a dangerous place for my " blind."

Somehow or other I can never believe that animals are going to hurt me. Many times have I taken what seemed to be foolish chances, and yet my good luck has always stood by me; but evidently I had tried it once too often; the pitcher had gone too often to the well. The tickling in my throat became unbearable, a trivial thing in itself, yet to have coughed would have been fatal. With infinite care I took from my pocket a small box of throat-pastilles which I always carry with me when watching for animals, as the nervous strain is very apt to cause a drying of the throat with resultant cough. At last, after nearly choking, I got one of the tablets into my mouth, and the situation was saved (this was probably the first time that a cough lozenge has saved a man's life), even though the mighty elephants were still there, with their trunks over my head.

At last their patience gave out, and slowly, so very slowly, they moved away. I stood up and saw them join the rest of the herd that had been doing some scouting. A minute or two

later one, a large cow, emerged from the cover of the woods and came into the glade just before the last gleam of sunlight vanished. Need I say that no time was lost in getting the camera working, and I secured a few feet of interesting film of one of the party that had nearly frightened me to death.

I was congratulating myself on the narrow escape, and promising myself to be more careful in the future, when I heard a commotion among the trees, and I wondered if the herd was returning. My dismay at seeing that this was what was indeed happening can be readily understood. Not only was there the small herd that had given me such an uncomfortable time, but there were at least fifteen or twenty others. My heart sank at the prospect, and I quickly made an opening in the front of my "blind," intending, if necessary, to crawl out; but I noticed that the herd had swerved off when they were about thirty yards away. For a short time they stopped to investigate, and I saw that one magnificent big bull was apparently the leader. Fortunately, he seemed satisfied that the way was clear, and he moved off, followed by the others as silently as ghosts. They had not been gone more than five or ten minutes when, to my surprise, several of my camera bearers came creeping along in a great state of excitement to report that a number of elephant were near the gully between me and the camp. The light was fast failing, but I rushed out with the photographic outfit, and had not proceeded more than three or four hundred yards before I caught sight of the

"A large cow elephant emerged from the cover of the woods"

"She and her comical little calf wandered about in the open eating grass" [see page 151]

herd that had left me only a short time before. They were strolling about in a large grassy clearing on the hill slope as though not quite certain what to do. There was absolutely no cover between the herd and ourselves, and yet, though the distance was only about a hundred and fifty yards, they did not see us. I set up the camera, but unfortunately there was not enough light to make photographs, so I had to give it up, very much to my disgust, as the animals were beautifully grouped against the forest background. It had been a very exciting afternoon, and I was glad enough to get back to camp, where a little later Tarlton and Harris joined me. They had seen nothing all day, and were feeling rather depressed at their bad luck.

Next morning we visited my " blind " in order to measure the distance from the elephants' tracks to where I had crouched. It was only then that we noticed that the two large trees against which my " blind " had been built were evidently favourite rubbing-places for the elephant; the trunks were plastered with red mud up to a point which I could only just reach with my rifle held up at full length. This gives some idea of the size of the beasts. Tarlton was rude enough to laugh at me for having selected such a suitable place for my " blind." But I pointed out that I had come for elephants, and that I had got them, even though they also nearly got me.

For a week after this we had no luck, though we tried all sorts of likely places. During these days Boran natives, whose regular watering-places had dried up, would bring their

cattle every morning to the elephants' water-holes and remain until quite late in the afternoon. We could hear elephant in the forest, and even see them occasionally looking out to see if the coast was clear, but it was not until dusk or dark that they would venture into the gully for their much-needed drink and bathe. Several times at night we were disturbed by the crashing of branches within a few yards of our camp as the elephant fed their way along. Lions, too, were interested in our outfit, and serenaded us at rather unnecessarily close range. We observed that the askaris (armed porters who do not carry loads) were very attentive to the fires, which blazed most constantly. The effect of the red glow reflected on the festooning moss and on the trees made the place look like a veritable fairyland.

After the week of bad luck I decided to investigate the possibilities of a large crater lake which we were told was only three or four miles away. Accompanied by my camera bearers, I made a very early start up the mountain. The trail was found to be well worn and twenty to forty feet wide, having, no doubt, been used both by elephant and buffalo for countless thousands of years, as well as by the vast herds of native cattle that at certain seasons are driven across the mountain. The customary morning mist shrouded the country, and though the forest was clear, the tops of the giant trees were lost in the drifting veil. All vegetation was soaking wet, and the noise of drops falling from the water-laden leaves was the only sound to be heard save the occasional sweet songs of forest birds.

On either side of the irregular trail the undergrowth was densely luxuriant, except near the ground, where it was fairly clear for three or four feet up. Owing to the extreme stillness and the lack of wind it was very necessary for us to go cautiously, unless we wished to risk stumbling on top of any elephant that might be about. As a matter of prudence it is always advisable to see elephant before they see you. Strange to relate and difficult to believe is the fact that you can easily walk up to within a few feet of the huge beasts without seeing them, even in moderately thin forests; and should you chance to be between a mother and her youngster it is more than likely that trouble will come to you with most surprising suddenness and disastrous results. It is equally true that unless the animals smell or hear you there is not much chance of their seeing you in the forest.

We had not proceeded more than a mile or so, and had seen nothing more dangerous than a pair of beautiful bush buck, when suddenly, not more than thirty or forty yards away, the head of a large elephant emerged from the bushes. Naturally we stopped absolutely still, and I wondered what was going to happen, for he was heading towards us. Within a few seconds I could make out the great forms of several more moving slowly among the foliage. When they were stationary their massive legs looked for all the world like tree trunks; their bodies were almost hidden by the young saplings, and what was visible looked like the forest shadows; even the long

tusks might easily be mistaken for dead branches drooping from the parent trunk. As I looked at the shadowy figures I realised how inconspicuous even the largest elephant might be so long as he did not move. Several times I saw branches being torn down, and notwithstanding the fact that I knew exactly where the animal should have been, it was long before I could discover any part of the immense body, though much of it was actually in view. All of which gave me a deep respect for the great king of beasts (as the elephant should be called), and at the same time I realised how very careful one should be when moving about in his country.

We were then in a position of decided uncertainty, and it was difficult to know what to do. I was in a hurry to reach the lake before the mists had melted away, but somehow I did not want to dispute the right of way with the herd. Apparently they were coming to the trail, perhaps to get out of the dripping of the trees, and it might mean that they would stand about for an indefinite time. Then, again, there was the chance that they would follow the trail: if so, which way would they go? Their direction would make quite a difference in our plans. The one thing certain was that for the present we had better not continue along the trail.

After we had waited some time two of the elephants came out into the open, and I decided that a wide and silently-made detour was quite in order; so we struck back into the forest, and after making a fairly large half circle came back to the trail

some distance on the right side of the herd and continued our way to the lake. About a mile farther along we heard the crashing of breaking branches not very far from the trail. Time was getting on, so we took a chance, and skirting the edge of the forest, we crept silently forward without further excitement, until at last we reached the lake, which was found to be almost hidden by the fog, so that one could get no idea of what was on the farther side. Under the existing conditions of "low visibility" I preferred not to do much wandering about, as I noticed that the mud on the edge of the lake was trodden into a veritable mire by both buffalo and elephant. Now if there is one animal for which I have a supreme respect it is the African buffalo, and I do not deliberately take any chances with him. We therefore selected a suitable place which would command a good view of the lake, and a rough "blind" was made as quietly as possible. The sound of an axe would have echoed all round the lake, so the hiding-place was made of easily broken scrub and grass; but it was, of course, anything but proof against the possible attack of elephant or buffalo.

When the hiding-place was completed the camera bearers returned to the seclusion of the forest, where they could spend the hours revelling in that favourite negro pastime sleep, while I sat quietly in my leafy bower and watched with delight the unfolding of the beauty of the crater lake. The shrouding mist was drifting about in a lazy way, now lifting, now settling again and hiding all from sight except the immediate foreground.

Unseen ducks, delighting in the veil that hid them from their enemy the hawks, chattered incessantly as they played about and enjoyed their morning meal. Now and then came the strange cry of the hammer-headed stork or the hoarse squawk of the snowy heron, sounding strangely loud across the lake; the curious echoes suggested that a mountain must rise abruptly above the opposite shore. A little later I was more sure of this, when I heard the barking and shrieking of innumerable baboons coming apparently from the sky. Seldom have I heard anything so weird.

The hours were passing, and I longed for the appearance of the sun, for the mist was bitterly cold; my hands were almost numb, and in this equatorial region I shivered, notwithstanding that I was clad in thick woollen sweaters, such as one would use in the northern countries.

It was half-past nine before the mist began really to lift, and the beautiful landscape unfolded itself before my eyes. The farther side of the lake, as I had expected, was walled in by a wonderful cliff, reddish in colour and rising above a belt of dense forest to a height of nearly a thousand feet, and it was on the ledges of this cliff that the baboons lived and screeched after the manner of their kind. The sun was still imprisoned by the blanket of mist, which was slowly drifting away under the influence of the rising breeze, so that the lake and its surroundings were in the quiet of shadow-land, and I wondered what they would look like when painted by the sun.

It was difficult to realise that this beautiful, peaceful lake had once been an active volcano. While I was wondering at the strange change that had taken place since those days of horrors the sound of objects moving in the forest, several hundred yards away, attracted my attention. Are they elephant or buffalo? was my thought. I would be equally content with either. Very soon a dark body appeared from among the bordering trees. It was a large buffalo, and he stood for a moment and gazed around the lake to see that all was clear, then he moved forward, shaking his immense horns as he came. Behind him others followed, crashing out of the forest with a complete disregard of the amount of noise they made. They came in dozens, in scores, until several hundred had assembled on the broad, grassy belt of flat ground that edged the lake. It was a wonderful sight, and was the first time I had ever seen more than twenty or thirty of these powerful beasts together, so naturally I was thrilled. My one regret was that they were so far away. Had I only placed my "blind" near where they had come out what a marvellous opportunity there would have been for the camera. As it was I was too far away to get really good results, even with my largest lens; moreover, the light was not good. Nevertheless, I determined to make some film that would at least show the vastness of the herd, as like a drove of great, black cattle they moved along to the water. I intended later, when the sun had lighted up the country, to stalk them.

Scarcely had I finished turning the handle of the camera

when I noticed that the herd was swinging round and watching the trail to the lake near where I was hidden. A moment later they turned suddenly and galloped away into the forest. The reason of their disappearance was difficult to understand. Surely they could not have seen me, for they were fully six or seven hundred yards away, if not more, and I was very well concealed. A curious rumbling sound caused me to glance toward the trail, and to my disgust there appeared the beginning of a long line of native cattle. There were several thousand head, evidently being brought by their owners, the Boran, to the lake for water. The sight was utterly discouraging, for I knew that there would be no chance of doing any more photographic work for many hours; and this, indeed, proved to be the case, for after the cattle had drunk their fill they turned their attention to the abundant pasturage around the shores of the lake.

I waited until late in the afternoon in the hope that they would leave, but at last was forced to give it up as a bad job. The camera bearers were recalled, and in utter disgust we headed back toward camp.

After going for some distance along the shadowed trail we nearly bumped into a large herd of elephant. The truth was I was thinking over the great disappointment of the day and the loss of such a wonderful chance, and was not keeping a very keen look-out, and only by good luck did we escape being seen by the herd. They were so busy feeding that, like ourselves,

they were not keeping a proper watch. As we were scarcely twenty-five yards from the nearest animal we retreated very carefully to a clump of trees from which we could overlook the situation. The results were not very satisfactory, for apparently the elephant were pretty well distributed on either side of the broad trail. We could only distinguish four or five, but could see and hear branches being torn down whichever way we looked, and as one cow elephant was standing in the middle of the trail we were quite sure that it was no place for us.

While watching the scene in a fascinated way there came a rude awakening when suddenly a huge creature appeared quite noiselessly behind us and only a few yards away. A rapid move was quite in order: another few seconds, and we might have been shaking hands with that elephant. The men needed no urging, and we literally glided away into the protecting shade of the forest. The unwelcome visitor having come behind us, we could not retreat along the trail, of course, so we made our way as best we could among the trees, intending to proceed for some distance parallel to the trail and join it again below the elephant. Accordingly, we stumbled along as quietly and as rapidly as possible through the tangled undergrowth. It was difficult going and not easy to judge the distance covered.

After a time we thought it would be safe to swing toward the trail, but our judgment was badly at fault, for we had not gone more than a few yards before I saw the legs of an elephant

about ten yards away on my left. Owing to the screen of leaves that hid the animal's body I could not see what size it was; however, that was a detail, as it was certainly large enough to give me more trouble than I needed. I beckoned to the camera bearers, who were following me in single file, to work to the right, while I crept back and joined them. No sooner had I accomplished this than we found our way blocked by a fair-sized cow and her calf, and it was only by remarkable luck that we had missed getting caught between the two, for they were some distance apart. Things were certainly getting unpleasant for us, and I lost no time in signalling to the men to retreat, when to our disgust and dismay we noticed that the elephant whose legs we had seen a minute or two before was moving toward us, tearing down branches as it came. Time was valuable, yet owing to the tangle of vines and the dead wood lying about it was extremely difficult to move with the speed that was so necessary without making a noise. Yet it had to be done, and we managed it somehow or other, though only by a very narrow margin did we win.

How it was that the animals did not scent us I can only explain by their close attention to the feeding question.

Thankful for having avoided what might have been a serious encounter, we continued our way through the increasingly dense under-brush, determined to go far enough to avoid getting foul of the elephant again. With this idea in view we went on for several hundred yards, and then felt sure that we

From a painting by the Author.

Suddenly a huge creature appeared

might return with safety to the trail. No sooner had we come within sight of it than a beautiful but most unwelcome sight presented itself. On the farther side of the open trail, against a large fig-tree, stood an immense bull elephant with a gleam of orange sunshine painting him a most wonderful colour. His tusks, long and very thin, seemed like bars of burnished gold. It was a picture that one might see once in a lifetime, and was really almost too perfect to be true. At the same time it was a disconcerting picture, for the sun had nearly completed his daily journey, and within a very short time the short evening twilight of the tropics would be upon us. The forest would be lost in the gloom so beautiful and mysterious, but so very undesirable for the traveller when that forest is the home of the larger and more dangerous wild beasts. It is bad enough even in daylight, but when the blessed light fails few men are brave enough, or foolish enough, to travel along the forest paths. Behind the sunlit monster the dim forms of other members of the herd could be seen indistinctly, moving slowly among the trees, and once more we moved back to where we could pass along unobserved until out of range of our possible enemies.

It must not be inferred from what I have written that elephants will inevitably attack all who come within sight, smell or hearing of them. Far from it. In probably the greater number of cases they will not attack. If they discover the presence of the human being and believe themselves unseen they simply melt away without making the slightest sound. Should

they have reason to think they have been discovered they cast discretion to the winds and crash through the forest, making an appalling noise. At times, however, for what reason no one knows, they will attack without the slightest provocation; and it is just this uncertainty that makes the elephant so dangerous to hunt. On one occasion elephants watched a party of men passing along a forest trail without giving any evidence of their presence until the last man had gone by, and then, without the slightest warning, an attack was made, proving all but fatal. A single bull, or a cow with a young calf, is always the most to be feared, while a large herd is not usually dangerous unless very suddenly disturbed, in which case they may act on the impulse of the surprise and go for the intruder.

There are no rules, so far as we know, that regulate the behaviour of the more dangerous animals. Under given conditions one individual may attack while another would run away. This is particularly true of lion. Should you catch a lion cub, the betting is entirely in favour of the parents attacking immediately they become aware of it. But I have caught a cub and had it held securely in order to attract the old ones so that I might photograph them coming, yet the plan failed because, though the mother and father came to within about a hundred and twenty-five yards, nothing would induce them to come nearer. Each individual seems to be a law unto himself, and a man is more than likely to pay the penalty of his action if he believes that he *knows* what an animal will do. Even with

From a painting by the Author

Elephant in Marsabit forest

the rhino, which is perhaps the least complex of the larger beasts that are capable of doing harm, one cannot be at all certain what line of action will be taken under given conditions. So the wise man is the humble man; and he is likely to live longer than he who thinks that he has nothing to learn. Where shooting is the object of the hunt there is not nearly so much danger as when the camera is substituted for the rifle, simply because of the very much closer range required to secure satisfactory photographs. And it is only natural for the camera enthusiast to get even nearer to the animal than is absolutely necessary, and the careful stalking required for this work is one of its greatest fascinations.

But to go back to our subject. We managed after a while to get far enough down on the trail to be clear of the elephant, and in the rapidly diminishing light we hurried along toward camp at what must have been nearly record speed, and at last we saw the glow of the fires lighting up the trees. We were all grateful for the sight, as the last part of the journey had been done when it was so dark that we could see little else than the deep green blue of the evening sky through the lace-like foliage of the forest-trees. Harris and Tarlton had returned a little earlier, having spent the previous day and night at a very promising water-hole, but unluckily without seeing anything.

The following morning, as the Boran were still occupying our favourite water-holes, we all went to Crater Lake, where we made new "blinds," in which we spent the day without

seeing anything except baboons and birds. For the next few days our bad luck continued.

A little later we paid another visit to the lake. Harris spent the day there, but shortly after noon I returned to the gully near our camp in the hope of seeing elephant toward the evening, for the animals had been seen several times coming to water about sunset. This time my "blind" was placed on a low rocky point that commanded a good view of a grassy hillside running to the edge of the forest. Near the "blind" was a well-beaten elephant trail coming from a dense forest. I had what might be considered altogether a most promising position.

Scarcely had the camera and outfit been arranged than the crashing sound of breaking branches proclaimed the proximity of a herd of elephant. But hearing them and seeing them were two entirely different things, and for over two hours I was kept constantly on the alert, since at any moment the animals might come into view. I hoped sincerely that this might happen before the light began to fail.

It was perhaps a little after four that I saw the gleam of tusks, and a moment later the great head and huge flapping ears of a very large cow elephant. She was still some yards inside the dark forest, leisurely tearing down branches from the tall trees and eating the luxuriant foliage. Soon another and then several more could be distinguished, moving slowly among the timber. At last, after what seemed ages of nervous waiting,

the big cow came to the edge of the grassy slope, followed by a medium sized calf. The light was getting low, but it was still fairly good, so I exposed some film.

For the next half hour the scene was one of constant interest and excitement. It was the first time I had ever had a chance to observe elephant at reasonably close range and in what seemed to be comparative safety and comfort. When the great beast came into full view I noticed that one of her long thin tusks was curved in a curious way so that it almost touched the other (the left one), which was normal in form. This somewhat interfered with the free movement of the long trunk, and she had a peculiar habit of drawing up the trunk and coiling it across the curved tusk. She and her comical little calf wandered about in the open, eating grass and dusting themselves with the dry red earth until they assumed the red colour of the soil. Occasionally the young one would get under its mother, and with its trunk curled over its head, would suckle between the mother's front legs.[1] The rest of the herd gradually came out of the forest and stayed out long enough to enable me to secure nearly two hundred feet of film before they became somewhat suspicious and moved back into cover. For perhaps an hour I could just see them standing or moving about in a group, flapping their great ears and occasionally throwing up their trunks, evidently trying to get the scent, a whiff of which

[1] One of the peculiarities of the elephant is that the teats are between the front instead of between the hind legs.

must have been wafted to them by the shifting breeze. At last they decided on a strategic manœuvre, and under the protection of the forest they moved back so quietly that after they were entirely lost to view I could detect not the slightest sound. Of course, I believed they had gone for good, but having often heard of how elephant will circle round and come back up wind, I determined to watch very carefully in order to guard against a surprise visit.

The sun had almost vanished behind the tree-clad hills when, in the path which I have already mentioned, I caught sight of something moving. Owing to the denseness of the forest little light reached the path, but I managed to distinguish the indistinct form of an elephant; the tusks and slowly-moving ears alone made this possible. Evidently the herd was working its way up wind, and I rather wondered what the result would be. The trail led to within about ten yards of where I stood, and the last few feet were in the open. Very slowly the herd of monsters moved forward, a step or two at a time, with trunks raised and ears spread out like sails. Nearer and nearer they came, until they were perhaps thirty yards away.

While watching the elephant I was startled by the deep roaring of a lion, that wonderful sound which awakens the echoes of the forest and gives one such a queer sensation. And the lion was evidently far closer than I would have wished. The roar was answered by another from the other side of the gully, so that I was literally between two fires. Again and again

"At last they decided on a strategic manœuvre, and under the protection of the forest they moved back"

the sound was repeated, and then again there was absolute silence. It gave a picturesque touch to the scene and added piquancy to the situation.

By this time the sun had disappeared, and the elephant were scarcely discernible in the sombre shadow of overhanging trees. On the chance that the film might possibly turn out good enough to use, I swung the camera round and turned the handle very slowly, so as to make the most of the dim light. Unfortunately, the trunk of a tree only a few feet away interfered with the view, but in spite of this defect and the dull light the film came out reasonably well. I also tried making some pencil sketches, but in the bad light it was very difficult to follow the dim outlines. While I was engaged on this work the breeze played me an unkind game by blowing for a few seconds directly toward the group of elephant. They became instantly alert, and one blew a strange trumpeting sound, which I knew portended trouble ; so, not wishing to be caught as on the previous occasion, I seized the camera and rifle, leaving the heavy tripod and other cumbersome articles, and crept out of the " blind " with what quietness and speed I could. The blood was thumping through my veins as I crawled along the steep, rough, tangled hill-side. Nor did I dare look back, time was far too precious. However, my usual good luck was with me, and eventually I reached camp in a somewhat exhausted condition after the severe strain and excitement. One feels strangely lonely when going through an experience of this kind, and I was very glad to be once more

within the glow of the fire and with my companions. They too had had an interesting day, having seen a large herd of elephant, and Harris had secured some long-range film of the animals bathing in Crater Lake. He had also been able to photograph a single elephant at fairly close quarters. Naturally enough, we were all delighted with our day's work, but glad to get between the warm blankets and enjoy a much-needed night's sleep.

With the coming of dawn we were awakened by a steady downpour of rain: a truly discouraging sound, as it might be the beginning of the rainy season, and this would mean the end of our elephant photography in the Marsabit country. With the coming of the rain the herds would seek the plains in order to get away from the irritating drip from the trees. The rains would drive us away, for if we stayed we should be unable to take the car across the various rivers, particularly the Guaso Nyiro. The weather cleared before noon, and I made another attempt from one of my "blinds," while Harris and Tarlton went off in search of buffalo.

On the way to the water-holes I was greatly surprised to see a single giraffe coming through the forest. A more unlikely place for these animals could scarcely be imagined, and I regret having been unable to secure a photograph, as people have since doubted my having seen giraffe in this neighbourhood.

While making my way back to camp I saw and photographed a large troop of baboon feeding on the ground under the wild

" Very slowly the herd of monsters moved forward, a step or two at a time, with trunks raised and ears spread out like sails "

olive trees; apparently they were eating the fruit of these trees. Of all wild creatures I doubt if any are more cantankerous than baboons. They always seem to have a grievance against each other.

I was amused at the disciplining that went on with this particular troop. The full-grown ones smacked the middle-sized ones, and they in turn cuffed those smaller than themselves. If a youngster happened to find some especially succulent morsel an older one would promptly hit him and take the food away, whereupon the youngster would scramble up the nearest tree and give full vent to his feelings by using, apparently, as much bad language as he knew. Having made the forest ring with his noise, he would come down and start a fight with one of his own size. Life seems to be divided between fighting, eating and sleeping. Unfortunately, I was not able to get very close to the quarrelsome family, so the photographs were rather disappointing.

The result of that afternoon's work was not very satisfactory. I saw no elephant, and the others, though they saw buffalo, found them in such dense forest that the camera could not be used; moreover, they brought back the bad news that fresh tracks of elephant in large numbers had been seen, all leading down the mountain; so that evidently the rain had started the elephant off to the plains. Under these conditions there was no object in our remaining any longer in the forest country, and as it rained again during the night, we decided to move

camp the following morning to where the oxen had been left, and prepare for the journey south.

While we were packing up Duggand brought word that he had seen buffalo in the dry crater, not far from the camp, so we promptly left the men to complete the task and made for the crater as fast as possible. From the steep edge we could see a herd of perhaps twenty buffalo on the flat ground, nearly half a mile away, and they seemed to fit in perfectly with the strange landscape; so did the baboons, which ran along the rocks and jumped from branch to branch, hunting for food. This crater, one of many in the neighbourhood, was about a mile across, and about a thousand or more feet below the level of the surrounding country. Around this perfect amphitheatre the steep walls on the west and south sides were clothed chiefly with forest, dense in parts and scrubby in others, while grass and clumps of bush covered the east and north slopes.

Duggand advised us to make the descent into this crater through the densest part of the forest, starting down the trail that led to the little spring from which we had been obtaining our drinking-water for the camp. We stopped there while the camera bearers filled their water-bottles from the crystal-clear spring. I examined the water with a low-power magnifying glass, and was surprised to find that it contained numerous minute leeches. These pests are to be found in most of the pools and springs in the country, and are the cause of serious

inconvenience to the animals. I used to wonder why the game would leave water-holes untouched and go long distances to "soda" springs, until one day I discovered that buffalo that had been drinking at one of these strongly-impregnated springs discharged, apparently from their throats, congealed masses of blood and leeches. In some way they seemed to have learned that the soda or saline water would rid them of the pests. I have never had an opportunity of doing any investigating into the matter except on this one occasion, but it seems to explain why the animals make long journeys to these ill-tasting springs, even when they have rain-water pools within easy reach. The finding of the leeches in the apparently perfectly pure water we had been using proved to me how necessary it is that *all* water used for drinking purposes should be thoroughly boiled. To ignore this simple precaution may have very serious results for the traveller in Africa.

The porters having filled their water-bottles, we continued our way down the steep hill-side, making use of the animal trails to get through the dense bush. These trails showed that they were used chiefly by buffalo, rhino and elephant, and one could not help wondering how these heavy creatures can go up and down such precipitous slopes.

An elephant can go up places where a man, even when using both hands, has the utmost difficulty in climbing. Whether they can go down equally steep inclines I am not sure; *apparently* they can and do, yet it seems impossible. But then

an elephant does so many things that are remarkable that we can believe almost anything of them. To *see* and not *hear* a herd of these gigantic creatures going through dense forest when they are anxious not to betray their presence is to test the evidence of one's own eyes and ears; they seem to glide along like ghosts, to be seen one moment and to vanish the next, in absolute silence. Never yet have I heard the actual footfall of an elephant, even when the animal was only a few yards away and the ground either stony or strewn with dry leaves, sticks and other, to us, noisy material. A more perfect shock absorber does not exist than the elephant's foot: it is a cushion, filled with a thick, jelly-like substance, that seems to deaden all sound. In arranging this Nature probably developed these strange feet so that in going over rough or hard ground the great weight of the animal would not receive any shock, the vibration of which might cause injury, rather than with the object of silence. So large an animal scarcely needed such protection in the earlier days when they had few, if any, enemies powerful enough to do them serious injury.

We found the task of getting down the steep wall of the crater far from easy, and frequently it was necessary to check our speed by holding on to tree trunks. As some of these trunks were covered with sharp thorns, we had to be careful to select those that were safe to touch, and the selection had to be made with the greatest haste. Eventually we reached the level ground and followed along the edge of the forest under

cover of low bushes, till we came to where the crater floor was covered with a growth of scattered thorn bushes : the thorniest examples of thorn trees that I have ever seen. Go as carefully as we might, our clothes and hands were constantly caught by the cat-like claws of the thorns.

Our progress towards where we had seen the buffalo was necessarily very slow; not only because we wanted to avoid making any noise, but because we did not know at what moment we might come across some of the herd asleep among the bushes. A rhino succeeded in giving us a fright by getting up, after we had passed him unobserved, and crashing off with a loud grunt. Of course, we thought that we had blundered into the middle of the buffalo herd, and were much relieved when we saw that it was only a stupid old rhino that was rushing away after having got scent of us. It was unfortunate that we had not seen him, as there might have been a good opportunity to make a film. In going over the ground later in the day we found that he had been lying in a muddy pool surrounded by high grass. This accounted for our not seeing him until he moved.

It took us a long time to reach the place where the buffalo had been seen, and we approached with the utmost caution, only to find that they had disappeared. The pool near which we had seen them was about fifty yards from the edge of the thicket and out in open ground, and we could see that it was still churned up where the animals had been wallowing; and I could not help a feeling of keen disappointment at having

missed the splendid chance for making film of such an interesting subject.

The question then to be decided was, what next to do? To go in search of the buffalo in the thick cover seemed to be a sheer waste of time and energy, while the chance of the herd coming back to the wallow before evening was remote. They might, however, come out on the plain to feed, and, if so, there was no reason why they should not come near where we were. After carefully going over the situation we decided to make a couple of "blinds" and wait. By using existing bushes and making screens of grass round them we soon had ourselves and our cameras well concealed. By this time it was about noon, and the heat in this wind-sheltered depression was almost unbearable. After waiting patiently for nearly two hours, we saw buffalo moving about in the scrub on the hill-side several hundred yards away. This was more hopeful, as it showed that they had evidently finished their noonday rest and were thinking of feeding. For a long time we watched them as their dark bodies appeared and disappeared among the bushes, and at last, to our delight, a few of them came out in the open and began to feed. But luck was against us; instead of moving in our direction they went farther and farther away. A little later some more appeared, and these commenced feeding towards us, so that there was still hope, and I examined my camera to see that everything was in order; I also examined my rifle. Suddenly there was a terrific noise in the bushes behind,

loud snorts and a crashing of brush. Several members of the herd had apparently decided to pay a visit to the water-hole, but being down-wind had got our scent when only a few yards away. Thoroughly alarmed, they made off as fast as they could, and in doing so gave the alarm to the rest of the herd, with the result that all immediately disappeared. To say that we were disgusted scarcely expresses it. Yet I suppose we had every reason to congratulate ourselves that they had not charged amongst us.

All chance of doing any photographic work was now at an end, and there was nothing for us to do but to pack up and get back to camp. Climbing out of the crater proved strenuous work and took a long time, so that it was almost dark when we finally came within sight of the tents, tired, hungry, and very thoroughly disappointed at our bad luck.

During the following days it rained frequently, and though I visited the crater several times I saw nothing. Tarlton and Harris in the meantime went to the north-west of Marsabit on the chance of seeing kudu, but they too were unsuccessful. These handsome antelope are found in the high, rocky mountains on the north-west side of Marsabit forest; they are difficult to find and still more difficult to photograph; so much so, indeed, that I have never even made any attempt. During this time one of the men, while out collecting wild asparagus (which had sprung up since the rain and is excellent food), came across a young hedgehog, the first I had seen in Africa. It was a curious little fellow, almost white, with a black nose, and

was only about six inches long. The strange, prickly creature was remarkably tame, but unfortunately it disappeared before we had a chance of photographing it. The smaller game was very scarce in this neighbourhood. There were a few Grant's gazelle, an occasional gerenuk, some bush-buck in the forest, and at Crater Lake I saw three water-buck. Guinea-fowl were abundant, and we were glad to get some for food, as we had not risked firing shots in the forest for fear of alarming the elephant, and had lived entirely on what meat we could buy from the Boran. These people possess very large numbers of cattle, which are regarded as an exhibition of wealth. They do not appear to use them for food (except, of course, for milk), and it was most difficult to induce them to sell us any for meat. Their whole lives seem to be devoted to the care of the great herds, which are used chiefly for the purchase of wives.

On the last day of March we said good-bye to the Marsabit country, and it was with sad hearts that we left this wonder mountain, the most delightful place I have seen in my wanderings through Africa. True, notwithstanding the unlimited possibilities, it had not been particularly kind to us, but we had enjoyed its beauty and its climate, and even if at times it had provided a somewhat superabundant amount of excitement, we forgave that. The danger and racking of nerves would soon be forgotten, while the experiences were well worth all they had cost. I trust that some day my good fortune will take me again to this forest home of the African elephant.

CHAPTER VI

THE RETURN FROM MARSABIT—MOTOR TROUBLES

ON the way south we could see a great change in the country between Marsabit and Lasarmis. What had been yellow and grey desert was now delicately tinged with green; grass and flowers were coming up, and the thorn trees were dressed in their feathery foliage. Where there had been no animals there were now herds of Grévy zebra, oryx and Grant's gazelle. Birds too were more in evidence, and the trees were covered with the curious nests of the different weaver-birds. The farther south we went the less evidence there was of rain, so apparently we had no need to worry about being able to cross the rivers.

On the second day's journey we left the men to make their way to camp, while we went ahead in the car to Lasarmis and spent as much time as we could in the "blinds." The day proved disappointing, for though we saw a fair number of animals, the only photographs I made were of a jackal and some birds. We found the remains of the poor old rhino near the water-hole where we had seen him on our last evening there. An Indian clerk from Marsabit Post, while on his way out on leave, had killed the wretched creature as it came to

drink. In some way it made me feel utterly disgusted, as I can never see why anyone should wish to kill these rapidly disappearing relics of the past. In very exceptional cases it may be necessary in self-defence, but under ordinary conditions it is little less than slaughter. There is no skill required; any fool can stalk the stupid old creatures to within shooting range, and with the modern high-power rifle they are easily killed.

We remained at Lasarmis till late in the afternoon, and saw the flocks of sand-grouse coming to drink. In watching them, coming as they do with extraordinary speed, in small, compact flocks, one is struck by their strange method of drinking. Scarcely have they alighted on the edge of the pool than with a whir of wings and that curious call note they are off; just one sip of water is all they seem to take. Whether the same flock returns again I am not sure, for they are so quick in their flight that, though I watched carefully, I could never be certain if in their wheeling about they did not become confused with other flocks. Several times it certainly seemed as if the same lot returned more than once. Thousands and thousands of these birds came while we were watching, and they were still coming when, as darkness was coming on, we left.

We went back over the road to where the men had camped near a small pool of very muddy rain-water, and the following morning returned to Lasarmis at daybreak, leaving the porters to follow. Again it was a day of disappointment, as the place

was occupied by an officer and company of the K.A.R., returning from the northern frontier with all their transport, to say nothing of innumerable wives and babies. The officer, quite a young man, had been stationed for a couple of years on the borderland, and he asked us whether we could possibly spare him a bottle of whisky, as he had not tasted any for a very long time. He had chosen a bad place to renew his acquaintance with the liquor, because, as he told us afterwards, the strong salty water of Lasarmis made the whisky almost undrinkable. We had discovered that on our last visit. People who do not know Africa think that what comes from water-holes and springs is water such as we have at home—clear, clean and limpid; but as a rule it has none of these much-desired virtues. Sometimes it is thick and green, more like pea-soup than water, and strongly flavoured with a barn-yard taste and smell; sometimes it is so bitter from the salt or soda that it is almost undrinkable. It spoils the best of whisky and makes the best of tea taste like the worst; even soup is difficult to swallow. River water is usually by far the best, but even that may be so muddy that it looks like soup. However, one gets used to almost anything in time.

Finding that we could do nothing at the water-holes, as the K.A.R. outfit did not leave till sunset, Harris took the opportunity to make some interesting film of the various types of weaver-birds' nests. These birds are remarkably gregarious, and build their nests in regular colonies, hundreds being hung

from the branches of a single tree. Some of the beautifully woven nests are built in clusters among the thorn-covered branches, and others hang from the slender twigs by thin leaves of dry grass, so that the nest swings in a most precarious way in the breeze.

We spent the last day in the "blinds," going into them before daylight. In walking from the camp while it was still dark we could hear animals moving about, but could see nothing. There is something peculiarly eerie in walking near an African water-hole in the dark. Things assume strange forms; ant-hills look like rhino; bushes like crouching lions; silent-footed animals slink away like ghosts; the pattering steps of a herd of zebra sound strangely loud, and their strange barking gives the impression of innumerable dogs scattered about the hills; birds give weird calls. It all combines to put one's nerves on edge, and makes one long for daylight. On this morning, as the night gave way to day and the country unfolded itself before our eyes, like a photographic plate in development, groups of animals, distinguished more by the dust they disturbed than by their form, moved away from the river-bed, so that by the time the horizon lighted up with the red glow of the rising sun the place was deserted, and in vain did we scan the hills for the herds we had hoped to see. The long day of waiting and watching produced nothing more exciting than a distant view of a herd of zebra. Evidently there was water to be had in other and less frequented places, so why should they come to where

they were almost certain to see their arch-enemy man? Close acquaintance with him is only to be risked when water is scarce; but now the recent showers had left many scattered pools of fresh water, and there was no need for coming to Lasarmis, at any rate during the day-time.

On the 4th of April we arrived at Merile, where a runner met us with our letters, and Harris received the bad news that he must return at once to America. This was about as discouraging as anything could be, as we had not yet made the sort of film we wanted. After a council of war it was decided that I should carry on with the work alone and see what I could do. This, of course, necessitated a complete change of plans and outfit, so it seemed best for me to return with Harris to Nairobi in the car, taking all the exposed film in case we had a chance to develop it. In the meantime the men would proceed with the ox-carts and meet me in about two weeks at Nanyuki, on the north side of Kenya, and about one hundred and fifty miles from where we then were. I wished to visit the country immediately south of the Guaso Nyiro, where I believed there would be suitable conditions for film work. At the present moment speed was of the utmost importance, as it was difficult to secure passage on the homeward-bound steamers at short notice.

Tarlton spent the afternoon tinkering with the car, while we repacked the outfit to suit the new conditions. The following morning, as soon as Duggand arrived, we started on our way with the heavily-laden car.

Now from a fair amount of experience with motor transport in Africa I consider a car to be a most excellent institution. But its success varies. Sometimes it saves a vast amount of time; sometimes it does not. Sometimes, too, it saves a lot of hard work, and again sometimes it does not. It all depends on luck, which means a reliable car and good conditions of roads and so forth. Garages are not yet established in the wilderness, so a breakdown, even a small one, may develop into a calamity. We had a good car, and Tarlton was a good driver, so all should have gone well, and had done so hitherto, when the pressing need of hurry had existed only in a mild form.

The reader will have guessed that trouble was doomed to come to us. It did; nothing very serious, except that the car stopped (fortunately near a water-hole), and positively refused to go on; cars are very obstinate at times. When a car stops of its own accord one gets out, examines the petrol supply, and seeing that it is ample, cranks the beastly thing; in a hot country this *may* start the car, but it is bound to start a copious flow of perspiration and even bad language. Of course, I am not suggesting for a minute that Tarlton used any, but he really did *look* a lot. I know nothing about the car's inner man, for which I have frequent reason to congratulate my ignorant self. So I looked on wisely but without wisdom. The bonnet was not on the engine, such frills not being necessary in very hot countries, so all the vitals were rudely exposed to view. After a lot of searching among the queer-looking parts, it was

discovered that the tube making the pump connection had burst. It was a decidedly silly thing for it to have done, because we did not possess a spare piece. There was nothing for it but to put a winding of tyre tape and various other things round the broken tube, and Tarlton and Harris between them made a really beautiful job of it. Unfortunately, as it turned out, under the operation of winding the tube had shrunk, and it positively refused to fit on. Weather conditions were warming up a bit! Well, there was nothing for it but to undo the good work and put the maimed tube on the connecting metal pipes, and wind it in this position. To me, as an onlooker, this did not appear to be a very difficult task, but apparently it was, and I had to hunt up my bottle of "New Skin" to repair the human injuries which resulted from trying to put hands in places where room was lacking.

Some zebra appeared at this time, and seemed rather amused at the scene. But they received quite a shock, for a few minutes later, when the water-hole had been polluted by very dirty hands, and the outfit repacked, the car started off with a noise that made the zebra think they were being chased by his Satanic Majesty. We had triumphed, at least Harris and Tarlton had, and of course I belonged to the party. It was a case of mind over matter, and as we all rattled along at a fair speed in the hope of reaching Archer's Post in good time we felt highly elated; but pride is said to precede a fall, and this was no exception to the rule.

We came to a dry and very sandy river-bed, called, I believe, Kisimani (we re-christened it before night), and in that we stuck hard and fast. In vain did the engine buzz and snort, and in vain did the wheels go round. The car stayed where it was, but went deeper into the sand. We brought sticks and stones and laid them under the wheels after jacking the car up. Then, removing the jack, Harris and I got behind the car and once more the engine was started and the gears were thrown in. Three inches the car moved forward, and then, as it settled down once more in its bed, the revolving wheels nearly drowned us in a bath of sand. We dug the sand out of our eyes and spat it out of our mouths and made another attempt and yet many more, but all without avail. Darkness had come on, and we realised that we were up against a difficult task. In vain we searched for flat stones and sticks : sticks were scarce, but thorns were more than abundant ; and at last we decided to accept the situation and make the best of things, for really there was nothing else that we could do. This meant that we must spend the night where we were, in the middle of the river-bed. Should it rain, and the clouds were banking up in a threatening way, the dry river would become a torrent in a very short time, which was not a cheerful prospect. Then, too, the place was well known to be the home of many lions, and besides this we had practically no food and not a drop of water. Neither could we make fires, as we had no wood. So altogether we were in a delightful situation. Under these conditions one of us must

keep watch while the others slept, and we were all so tired that keeping awake was anything but easy.

I had first watch, and had to keep awake and alert till midnight. In the sombre night-light the place became infested with lion. Several rocks appeared to move about in an alarming way, and when the moon peeped out between the clouds all the shadows walked about and seemed to be coming for me. It was all very unpleasant, and I wondered why I had come to Africa. Time went terribly slowly, the luminous face of my watch scarcely showing any movement of the hands, and yet eventually the hour of midnight arrived and I awakened Harris; it seemed a shame to disturb his slumber, he was sleeping so peacefully. He rubbed his eyes, yawned and slowly developed signs of being awake, especially when I punched him vigorously, and at last he got up. I know that he hated me most cordially. So did Tarlton, who had been disturbed by the noise, and he said a lot of things to me that I cannot now remember: in fact, they made little or no impression on me, for I was asleep before he had finished them. But Tarlton is a good chap, and when he found that Harris was physically unable to keep awake he got up and kept his watch for him, and there I found him when I opened my eyes as the first gleam of dawn lightened the sky. We had two small biscuits each, the last of our stock of food, and then began the serious task of getting the car free. First we unloaded it completely, then a stone-paved way was made through the worst part of the sand. This all sounds very easy.

The chief difficulty was that all the stones within easy reach were small and round, or else too large to carry, so we had to go a long way to find what we wanted. After two hours of strenuous work the car was started, but, as bad luck would have it, the stone roadway had not been carried quite far enough, and once more the car settled down in the sand. So the rest of the river-bed had to be paved before we finally reached the firm bank.

By eight o'clock we were on the road once more, and an hour later arrived at Archer's Post. Here we had a much-needed wash and a meal, and found that luck was with us after all. The Guaso Nyiro was much deeper than when we had crossed it about seven weeks ago, and the car had to be stripped of some of its vital parts, as it was quite obvious that it could not possibly go across under its own power. Here is where the piece of luck came in: a team of oxen doing transport work for the Post should have started before we arrived, but had been delayed, fortunately for us, and the officer in charge of the garrison very kindly placed it at our disposal, so that our car was changed from one of sixteen horse-power to one of sixteen ox-power. In a short time it was towed across the river and up the very steep bank on the other side, and once more we were on our way.

We took the road to Meru by way of Isiolo, where preparations were being made on a large scale to catch Grévy zebra with a view to taming and utilising them as draught or

"This meant that we must spend the night in the river-bed"

"Our car was changed from one of sixteen horse-power to one of sixteen ox-power"

pack animals. Owing to their being immune to the bite of the tsetse-fly, which is so fatal to domestic animals and prevents them being used in certain districts, the zebra would prove of great value. Experiments have been made frequently with the common zebra, but they have not been satisfactory, chiefly owing to the bad disposition of the animals. The Grévy, however, promises better, is less vicious and more easily tamed, and, being so very much finer and better built than his smaller cousin, may prove of real value. Though the Grévy zebras have a much more restricted range than the common zebra, they are fairly numerous and not very difficult to catch. Presumably they will breed freely in captivity, so that there should be no shortage of them.

Recent showers made our going rather slow, as a part of the road was of black cotton soil, which when wet is about the worst thing that a motor can fight against. On arriving at Meru at sunset we were glad to find that rest-houses had been built on the camping ground. This was a great improvement, as it saved the bother of tents. We had not room in the car for them, so would have fared badly owing to the heavy rain which fell during the night.

Meru is, to my mind, the most delightful post in Kenya. It is on the edge of the Kenya forests, has a fine view of the mountains and of the country below, perfect soil for cultivation, abundant water of good quality, and as fine a climate as anyone could wish, cold enough at night to make fires most welcome.

There are practically no insect pests, so it may well be considered one of the choice places for a station. I had first seen it when it contained but one log-house; now, besides the various offices for official use, there was the head-quarters of the military officer commanding the district and as far as the northern frontier, and quarters for a couple of companies of the K.A.R. There were also a number of well-built houses for the various officials, and the good camping ground, with its bandas or rest-houses, had completed this remote settlement.

After visiting Colonel Llewellyn, who had been extremely kind to us, and Mr. Weeks, the District Commissioner, who had also helped greatly with men and information, we left Meru and continued on our way towards Nairobi. The road was in a somewhat uncertain condition owing to recent heavy showers, and we got stuck several times in the slippery mud, which at times made the situation look very serious. However, we managed by various contrivances to get through to Embu before midnight, and arrived at Nairobi the following day shortly after dark. During the next eight days our time was well occupied, thanks to the wonderful kindness of Mr. Martin Johnson, who allowed us to develop our film in his well-arranged dark room. I shall never forget the kindness that both he and his charming wife showed me, not only then, but later. Considering that we were engaged in the same sort of work, making cinema films of the game of the country, we might have been considered in a way as rivals, or at least as competitors,

and it would not have been surprising if he had been unwilling to help us; but far from it. He did all in his power to assist, and I learned from him a great deal about developing, drying and taking care of cinema film. I owe him a debt of gratitude that I shall never be able to repay. It is a great pleasure to know that, thanks to the recognition and pecuniary assistance that he has received from his own country (the United States), he is now carrying out a really big undertaking in making film records of the animals and birds of Kenya. No better man could be entrusted with this valuable task. Yet does it not seem curious that America is doing for our colony what we ourselves should be doing? We seem so utterly lacking in appreciation of both the value and interest attached to photographic records of wild creatures, that it seems impossible to obtain the necessary support in the way of money. Perhaps when the big game becomes scarce, or when many species have disappeared altogether, we may wake up, and realise that for the sake of a few thousand pounds the chance of making true photographic records has gone for ever. We must be thankful that America, with its splendid institutions, such as the American Museum of Natural History in New York, has been awake to the necessity of securing the photographs before it is too late. As I have stated elsewhere, it is impossible for us poor men (and most of those who are really interested in big-game photography are very poor) to carry on the work in an adequate way. I speak feelingly on the subject, for I have tried in vain

to interest my own countrymen, and have been forced through lack of funds to abandon going on with the task.

On the whole the films we had made at Lasarmis and Marsabit turned out well, from the photographic point of view, but the subjects left much to be desired. It was necessary, therefore, that I should bestir myself and find game that would enable me to make the sort of photographs I knew could be made.

The amount of money which Harris generously left for my use was only sufficient to last, with rigid economy, for a couple of months, so when I left Nairobi on April 18th I realised that I had not a day to waste. Going by motor, I reached Nanyuki two days later, to find that the safari had not yet arrived; but there was news that it was on its way, and the following afternoon saw Duggand with his ox-wagons, and the porters turned up only one day late.

I spent the day to good advantage in making arrangements with a most excellent man, named De Bruin, to take me and my outfit for a trip to the country near the Guaso Nyiro. I also enjoyed a few hours of very good rainbow trout-fishing on the Nanyuki River, within three or four hundred yards of the actual Equator. It seemed a strange place to be catching trout, which one associates almost entirely with northern countries. But I found the trout in good condition and very gamy, as the river water, coming as it does from the heights of Kenya, where snow is found throughout the year, was as

cold as an English stream. Needless to say, the trout had been brought to Kenya from England or Scotland, and though it is but a few years since they were released in the African rivers, they are doing remarkably well and growing with almost unheard-of rapidity.

CHAPTER VII

IN THE COUNTRY SOUTH OF THE NORTHERN GUASO NYIRO—WONDERFUL LUCK IN PHOTOGRAPHING RETICULATED GIRAFFE AND ZEBRA—ENCOUNTER WITH A RHINO FAMILY

ON the third day after my arrival at Nanyuki I started northward on what was to be the best trip I have ever made. The outfit was composed of ox-wagon, a horse and a mule and a few porters. I had discharged and sent back to Nairobi several porters who were unfit (or said they were), also such luxuries as gun-bearers and the head-man, and some of the men who wanted to leave. One askari was left in charge of my superfluous outfit to await my return.

The first day's trek was through a flat and very uninteresting region, almost gameless; but the next day, going north-east after crossing the Nanyuki River, we struck more promising conditions; the country was broken and rolling, with scattered trees and high yellow grass, but it was absolutely dry, and De Bruin began to get worried about water for his oxen. He and I rode on ahead and visited several places where water had been plentiful only a few weeks ago. Now, sun-baked, cracked mud was all we found. We saw a pair of rhino, and I succeeded in getting a short piece of film of the old cow, but she did not

behave as I wished. We saw her lying asleep under a large thorn tree, and stalked her until we were within about sixty yards, when a current of air carried our scent to her, whereupon she promptly got up, turned round and round, snorting and putting her tail up to show that she was alarmed; but of course she did all this on the farther side of a small thorn bush, so that I could not get a clear view of her. I moved slightly to one side with the cinema camera, expecting that she would make a dash in my direction, and that I should be able to make a really good film of her, and then dodge behind a big tree when she came too close for comfort. My plan was right enough, but she upset it by deciding not to interview me at closer quarters; instead she turned, and going in a comical zig-zag fashion, soon disappeared in the bush.

We saw a certain amount of game, chiefly zebra, oryx and stein-buck, but it was very wild. As a matter of fact, we were more interested in water than in game. Up till four o'clock we had not found any, and the position began to look serious. Our animals, having travelled all day in the heat, were seriously in need of a drink. De Bruin instructed the men to make for a certain valley a few miles away, while we scouted ahead as fast as we could, only to find that the water-hole he had counted on contained scarcely sufficient water for the animals to have a half ration each. That was better than nothing, but still not enough; so again we rode ahead, he taking one course and I another. The country was a series of rolling,

grassy plains with numerous cone-shaped, rocky hills of true African type. Several times I believed I saw signs of water in tree-lined gullies, but the slightly green tone of the grass proved a false sign, for the beds of the small streams were as dry as powder. As the sun was setting, I dared not risk going farther, and made my way back to where I hoped to find the camp. In the dim twilight I very nearly lost my way, but eventually came within sight of the fires, very much to my relief. I was disappointed to find that De Bruin had not arrived. After waiting till eight o'clock, I decided to build large fires on two near-by hills, and fired a couple of shots. In the distance I heard an answering shot, so fired one more to make sure that he would locate the sound, and then, feeling that all was well, I returned to camp and had dinner, as my last meal was then but an indistinct memory. Hour after hour went by, but still there came no sign of the wanderer, and I began to get worried and sent my two askaris out with some men to remake the fires, and instructed them to fire several shots with their ancient service rifles. After waiting a long time and hearing no sound I went after the men, and found that the rifles refused to fire. I used my own, but received no reply; and as it was now past midnight there was nothing to do but return to camp and get some much-needed sleep. The following morning De Bruin turned up at eight o'clock, a forlorn man on a still more forlorn horse. He had lost his way and the camp completely, and had spent a wretched night on a rocky hill, keeping lions away from

his horse; several times they had come within a few yards, and the shot I had heard was not in reply to mine, but had been fired at a lion. It was a strange coincidence that it should have been fired at that particular moment.

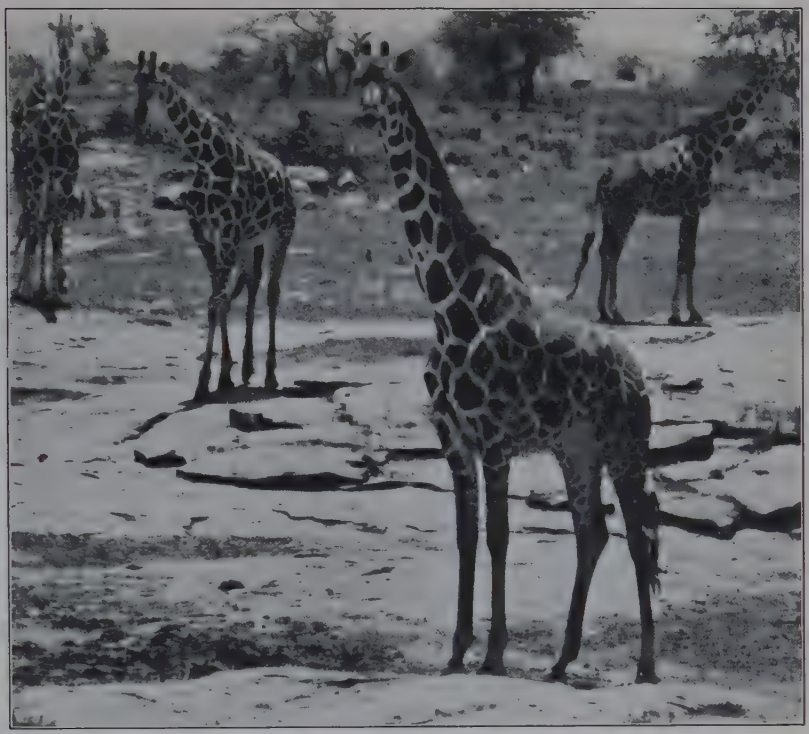
After a meal and a few hours' sleep De Bruin suggested that we take a look round the country, both for water and game. A few miles from camp we saw a herd of thirty-four giraffe which appeared to be feeding towards a boulder-covered hill, so we left the horse and mule with a porter and took up a good position among the rocks, armed with a cinema camera. The giraffe, which were about eight hundred yards away, were moving slowly in our direction, and it seemed almost certain that they would soon be within easy range of the camera, when suddenly they all took fright and cantered away. With my glasses I examined the country for the cause of their alarm, and discovered that a man was stalking them. We found afterwards that he was a well-known fellow of evil character who spent most of his time poaching. Evidence of his work was found in several places, in the form of skeletons of giraffe and rhino. We saw no sign of water during the afternoon, and decided to move towards the Guaso Nyiro the following morning, where at least we should be sure of a plentiful supply.

It was a long day's journey across country, for of course there were neither roads nor trails, as we were well away from the beaten track. We two rode ahead to find a way for the oxen, and in the rough and in places rocky ground this was no easy

task. The dried water-courses were the most serious obstacles, owing to the steepness of the banks and the boulder-strewn beds; wherever the banks shelved gradually there seemed to be the greatest number of boulders, and where the banks were steepest the stream bed was smooth sand and gravel. By careful handling the teams brought the creaking wagon through almost impossible obstacles.

In the course of our march we came across several old Masai manyata, but there were no signs of any people having been living in the district for some time past. With any other tribe the presence of old villages would mean that water was near; but the Masai, for reasons best known to themselves, usually avoid the proximity of water and take their vast herds of cattle long distances for the daily drink. I imagine the origin of this habit of keeping the villages on dry country is that the tsetse-fly is usually found in the neighbourhood of water, so that it is unwise to risk allowing the cattle to spend the nights anywhere near the danger belt.

We were rather surprised to find near one of these old manyata two pools of fairly good water. Strangely enough, instead of being in low ground they were on the top of a low hill, with masses of shelving rock forming the basin of one of the pools. Whether or not it was rain-water we could not tell, but it was evidently a more or less permanent supply, as most of the rain-water pools in the vicinity were almost, if not quite, dry at this time of the year. An examination of these water-holes



Reticulated giraffe

"Surely there is no animal more beautiful and certainly none that seems more in keeping with an African landscape"

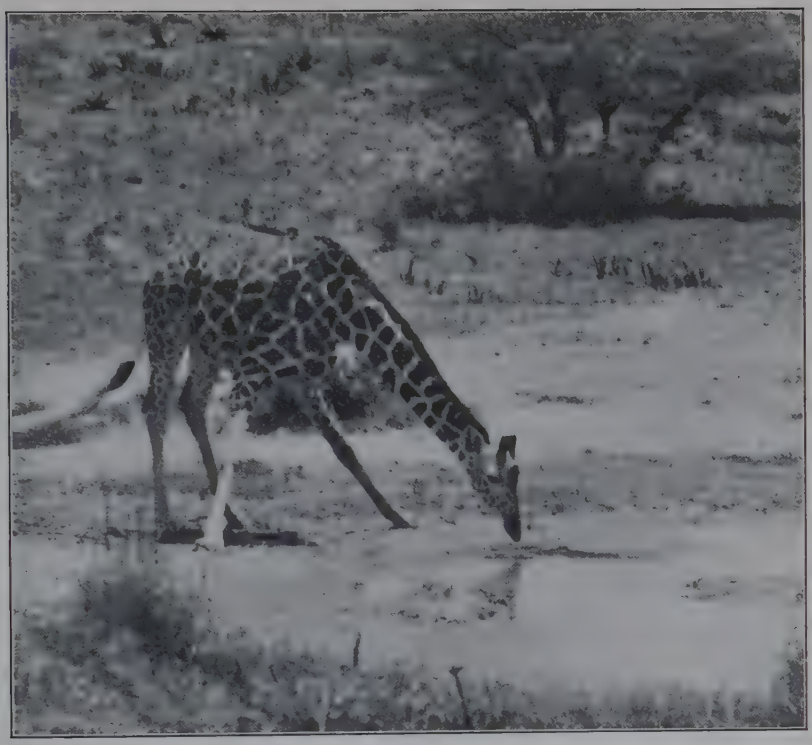
showed that a certain number of animals habitually came there to drink, and to my delight giraffe seemed to be the most numerous of the visitors. I wondered whether at last I had found the place for which I had searched so long. Anyhow, I determined to build " blinds " and see what would happen.

The two pools were about a hundred and fifty yards apart. One was thoroughly suitable for my work, having a number of trees and thick thorn bushes within a few yards of it, and the settings, so far as pictorial requirements went, were perfect. Too good to be true, I thought. The other was far less interesting, being flat and with very little chance for cover. De Bruin strongly advised my building the " blind " where the scenery was best, but I, having had a good deal of experience, realised that the less cover there is near a water-hole the more likely are the animals to visit it. However, to make sure, I decided to build two " blinds " at each place, so that whichever way the wind blew, and to whichever place the animals came, I would be prepared. The ox-wagon was sent on with some of the men to the Guaso Nyiro, which was about six miles away, in order that the camp might be made, while we, with eight men, remained behind and built the necessary " blinds." Having completed our task to my satisfaction, we moved towards the river. Game did not appear to be very abundant : three or four giraffe, and a few oryx, common zebra, Grant's and Thompson's gazelle ; and they seemed very shy. The prospects were not so hopeful as I had expected. We found that camp had been made in a

delightful spot on the bank of the river, and the men, who love bathing, were enjoying themselves thoroughly, utterly regardless of the crocodile, which, judging from the number of their footprints on the sandy bars, were fairly numerous.

The following morning we were up very early, and, armed with a full battery of cameras, I was in one of my " blinds " by six o'clock. The men went back to camp with instructions to return about sunset. De Bruin, in the meantime, was to cross the river to see if there were any buffalo in the vicinity.

Within an hour after I had arranged my cameras and made everything ready my day of real pleasure began. Over the brow of the distant hills the head of a giraffe appeared, nearly half a mile away. This was a good sign ; where there was one there might be others, and this one was evidently coming in my direction. I had but a short time to wait before other heads came into view. Slowly the necks and bodies appeared, and there seemed to be a dozen or more. Whether they were coming to drink or not there was no way of telling. With the aid of my field-glasses I could see them feeding from the flat-topped thorn trees, but to my dismay they turned and went behind a ridge and were soon lost to view. It was discouraging, but not altogether hopeless, as they might again change their course. The day was still young, and a great many things might happen before evening. A small scattered herd of Grant's gazelle were feeding more or less in the direction of the water-hole. Nearer and nearer they came, but they were such small creatures that



"He spread his long front legs apart, and in this way came within reach of the water"

I could not make even reasonably satisfactory photographs of them unless they were within about thirty yards or less; and of course they stayed just beyond that distance, and I had to content myself with watching the graceful creatures as they fed and played and everlastingly switched their tails from side to side.

At last, shortly after ten o'clock, the giraffe came into sight once more. They were a long way off, but still they were there, and slowly, very slowly, coming my way. One member of the herd was apparently detailed to be the scout, and he left the others and came along in a most leisurely way, stopping to feed at each bush and tree; between whiles he would stand still and gaze about the country in every direction. For nearly an hour he continued his slow way towards the water-hole, and it seemed as though he would never come. Waiting was nerve-racking work, but eventually he came to within fifty yards or so of the pool, and I wondered what to do. If I photographed this one the sound of the cinema camera might frighten the shy creature, and all chance of making pictures of the rest of the herd would be gone. On the other hand, suppose he came and actually drank, would the others follow his example? If they did not I would have lost a splendid opportunity. It was very difficult to know what to do. I hated to miss a certainty for a possible chance, yet I wanted the whole herd. While I was still debating which would be the best course to follow the giraffe approached the pool, and after scrutinising the surroundings with the utmost

care, he spread his long front legs apart and in this way came within reach of the water. My hand was on the carefully-focused camera, and I still wondered what to do. The temptation was great, for the picture was thoroughly interesting; but I resisted it, though for years I had hoped for such an opportunity. Having drunk his fill, the beautiful creature regained his normal position, and moved slowly away from the edge of the pool and began feeding on a near-by bush. My chance had gone, but I saw that the rest of the herd, finding that the scout was safe, were making their way towards where, trembling with excitement, I stood in my hiding-place.

What a beautiful picture they made as they came with long, slow strides closer and closer; fourteen there were, with several large bulls among them. Unfortunately, there were no very young ones. They alone were needed to complete the picture. Near the giraffe, to make the picture still more interesting, in the background the gazelle were feeding, assured that all was safe so long as the keen-sighted animals were there to keep the necessary look-out. It was some time before the giraffe decided to commence drinking. They wanted to be quite sure that the place was really safe before putting their heads down.

Carefully they examined every bush and tree, and my "blind" came in for more attention than I liked. Every care had been taken to make certain that I was concealed even from their keen eyes, but even so I was worried, as the animals were

" Two large bulls walked to the edge of the pool, straddled their legs, put down their heads and drank "

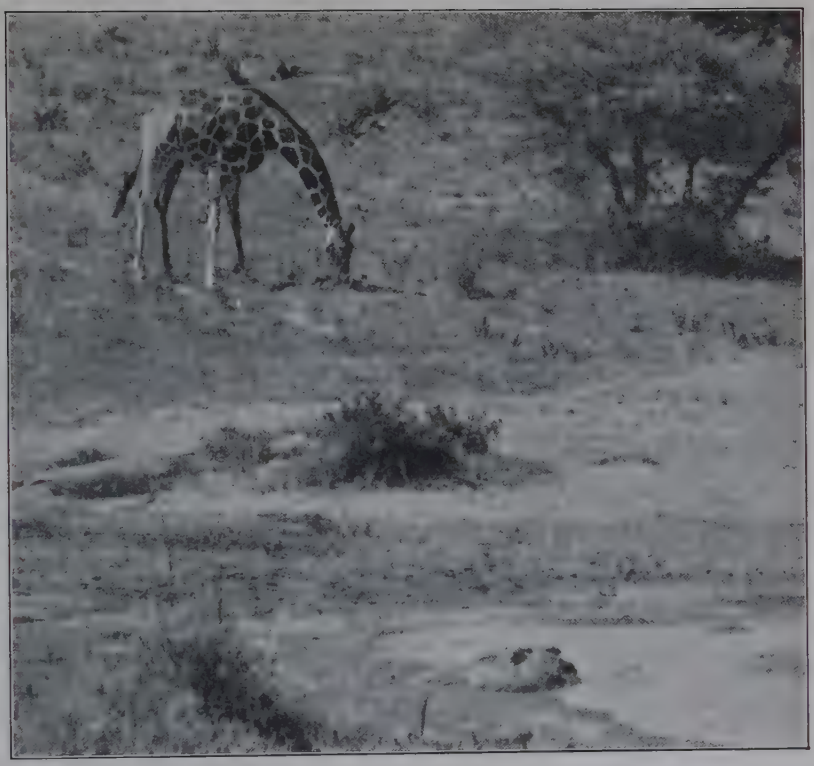
not more than twenty-five or thirty yards away, and their great height made them appear even nearer.

At last the great moment came. Two large bulls walked to the edge of the pool, straddled their legs, put down their heads and drank, unconscious of the fact that I was turning the handle of the cinema camera and recording their every movement. Behind the two the others were standing about, looking or feeding and apparently posing for the film. Need I say that my excitement was so keen that my hand trembled violently and my knees shook so that I seemed to hear them. What I had longed for and worked for during the past years was at last realised, and more than realised, for in my wildest dreams I had never expected such a picture. Everything was in my favour, fine light, fairly good background, and all these wonderful, reticulated giraffe. Surely there is no animal more beautiful and certainly none that seems more in keeping with an African landscape. I was enjoying the most interesting experience in all my photographic hunting, and felt repaid a thousand-fold for all the hardships and disappointments of the past. How much better this was than shooting! No man with his rifle had ever had such perfect thrills of satisfaction and clean pleasure. Life was certainly worth living. Yard after yard of film was registering the scene, was being changed from mere celluloid, coated with chemical, to a moving picture of interest and beauty that required but the magic touch of the developer to bring it into being. But, was I giving the correct exposure? Was everything working

properly? Was the focus right? These and a thousand other questions and doubts ran through my mind as I turned the handle at what I hoped was the proper speed. In my excitement and nervousness it was difficult not to turn too fast and to keep it going evenly during the various phases of the animals movements. When they moved fast I wanted to do likewise, and when they stopped still, almost unconsciously I did the same. The beautiful group moved about, some drinking, while others fed, not only on the thorny branches of the trees, but on the ground, which is rather unusual, but all of which the camera was faithfully recording.

As I watched the long-necked creatures making their meal of the fine leaves of the thorn bush I could not help wondering how they avoided lacerating their mouths and tongues with the sharp, claw-like thorns which grow both ways, so that they catch you coming and going.

One large bull, who seemed to be the leader, decided that the bush under which I was hidden, and which formed the support of my "blind," was capable of furnishing him with food. I had not counted on this, and felt sure that even if he did not see me he would be sure to get my scent. I had not yet made all the photographs I wanted, so the probability of the alarm being given made me most uneasy. On he came, until he stood against my bush, so close that I could have touched him, and then, without having seen or smelt me, he quietly fed directly over my head. Need I say that I scarcely dared to move an



" Fed, not only on the thorny branches of the trees, but on the ground, which is rather unusual "

eyelash. Imagine being so close to one of the shyest and most keen-eyed of all the animals that I could see the long tongue drawing the leaves into his mouth, and the great, wonderful, brown eyes, with their long lashes! It was a curious sensation, and, I believe, quite a unique situation. By strange good luck the bush proved disappointing, and after a short time the handsome creature moved away, quite unconscious that he had been within touching distance of his supposed enemy, man.

For over an hour the herd stayed within range, without once coming down-wind of me, so that I had ample opportunities for photographing them in every position; and then, as they began to move away the Grant's gazelle came and fed round the water-hole. Unfortunately, they never took a drink, but I succeeded in making some rather interesting film of them in the open and among the bushes. As ill-luck would have it, they never came as close as I wished, so that the photogaph cannot be said to be really portraits of the animals but rather pictures of them in groups. A small herd of oryx passed, but they were several hundred yards away. I hoped in vain that they would come to the water. One interesting feature of the day's work had been that the water-hole with the beautiful settings was not visited by a single animal, so my intuition had proved correct.

When the camera bearers arrived, shortly before sunset, I packed up the outfit, feeling that this had been a day of days,

one to be remembered for the rest of my life, and if only the film came out as I hoped sincerely it might, I would be able to show to people who have never been to Africa the beauty of the giraffe in his own home, free, unmolested and showing no evidence of alarm or fright: such pictures are worth very much more than those of scared creatures. The "if" was a big one; photographs do not always turn out well, and there were many things which I might have done wrong. Time would tell, and I longed for the day when I could actually see the results of this day's work. My one regret was that Harris was not with me to have shared my pleasure.

On arriving at camp I found that De Bruin had seen no buffalo or hippo, though he had seen tracks of the former in the thick bush country near the river. As I had made all the pictures I wanted of giraffe, there seemed no reason to remain in this district. Time was valuable, and if I wished to visit all the places we had arranged to go to and be back at Nanyuki in sixteen days, which was as long as our food would last, it was neceessary that we should move to our next camp.

We all felt regret at leaving the Guaso Nyiro, with its abundance of sweet, clean water, for we might be going to a dry part of the country where the supply would be uncertain both as to quality and quantity.

Our plan was to go south-east in search of a district where we might find a water-hole and plenty of zebra. De Bruin remembered having seen such a place when once before he

" I watched the long-necked creatures making their meal of the fine leaves of the thorn bush "

had ridden through this country. At the time it had not been of particular interest to him, but he thought he might be able to find it. The question was whether there would be water, as the season was abnormally dry.

The day's journey was a hard one, especially for the oxen, as the ground was very rough. It was late in the afternoon before we finally came to the water-hole, which fortunately was full of water, and camp was made at a safe distance, while we examined the country. As my companion had expected, zebra were remarkably numerous, and from the signs round the water-hole the chance of success looked extremely good.

By the time darkness set in we had built a "blind" and made everything ready for the next day's work. Before daylight I had taken my place and had the cameras in position. From then until dusk I was kept constantly alert and hopeful. Zebra were in sight most of the time, but they refused to come to drink, so I returned to camp very much disappointed. The following morning I was again in the hiding-place before dawn, and a little later saw zebra coming. In a most aggravating way they stayed almost within range, in small herds, but seemed to be suspicious of the actual water-hole. Several times they came almost within the required distance, but after a while they retired to the bush. I sat there patiently waiting and watching, and cursing the flies, which made life almost unbearable. Never have I seen so many of these pests or such persistent ones. They buzzed about my eyes and mouth till I was nearly crazy.

But the time came when I almost forgot their existence. Several hundred zebra were within view, from seventy to a few hundred yards away. At last, at half-past twelve by my watch, one, a fine-looking stallion, more daring than the others, ventured nearer and yet nearer; finally he came to the pool, not twenty yards from where I was, and began to drink. He stood broadside to me and gave a perfect opportunity for my camera. Had I placed him there I could not have chosen a more perfect pose or position, and with a feeling of keen satisfaction I turned the handle of the cinema camera.

While he was still drinking the others, seeing that no harm had befallen their companion, took courage, and slowly and in a hesitating way came forward. When within a few yards of the water they rushed in and began to drink. Once more a dream was realised. No words can describe my feverish excitement. Flies might almost obstruct my vision, they might even crawl round and into my mouth, and I only spat them out; they slid down my face, which was dripping with perspiration, but I did not care. The zebra were there before me, as near as I wished, and in numbers such as I had never hoped to see, and I was exposing film with almost frantic haste. It was even more exciting than with the giraffe, for they were dignified in their movements, while these zebra were so nervous that they were on the jump every moment. A bird flew past, and all would start violently and rush away, only to return the next second. Their nervousness imparted itself to me, and I could

" The day's journey was a hard one, especially for the oxen, as the ground was very rough "

scarcely turn the handle at its normal speed. The animals were everywhere, and I wanted to include them all in the picture, with the result that I swung the camera constantly from one side to the other. It was all too wonderful, too perfect, and I could not believe my good luck. Hundreds of feet of film were exposed, cameras loaded and reloaded. Though I had to be careful not to show movement, there was no need for very great care so far as noise was concerned, because the animals were in such numbers, and were making such a splashing as they went in and out of the water, that I could have shouted and not been heard.

Those who stay at home and see, perhaps, a pair of zebra in a Zoo, cannot have the least idea of what it is like to see great herds of these striped animals (in football jerseys, as someone said when I showed the picture) at close quarters in their wild state. Once more I thought how much more interesting the camera was than the rifle. The zebra is scarcely a subject for the sportsman, whereas for the camera no animal gives better results; they seem made to be photographed, and I revelled in the task of portraying them in every pose. Like leaves of a tree, no two were exactly alike; the stripes always show some slight variation in the arrangement, which conforms to a more or less regular pattern. Their skin glistened in the noonday sun like the coats of well-groomed horses, and they were all plump and well nourished. But what quarrelsome creatures they are! Few are free from the marks of hoofs or teeth, for

they fight constantly, and squeal in a strangely petulant way. They are not lovable animals, perhaps, but interesting and wonderful subjects for the camera. For hours these herds stayed within sight, playing sometimes, fighting more often, rolling in the dust and feeding and drinking when not otherwise engaged. They stayed till I had used up all the film I had brought for the day's work, and when they finally made off, shortly before sunset, I felt that this day had in some ways rivalled the wonderful day with the giraffe.

These were the two best days I have ever experienced in photographing. The zebra make, perhaps, the more striking picture, but that of the giraffe drinking is a rarer one, for, strangely enough, there are but few white people who have ever seen a giraffe drinking in its wild state. I have spent weeks and weeks watching for it, but only twice have I seen it happen, and many of the best-known white hunters, who have spent the greater part of their lives in the giraffe country, tell me they have never seen it. Photographing wild animals is a strange sport, terribly discouraging at times and then wonderfully exhilarating. Here in four days, one of which was spent in travelling, I had secured more and better pictures than in all the months previously spent in Africa. April 26th and 29th are marked in my field diary as "splendid days," and certainly they were. If only such days were more frequent! But a few may happen during a lifetime, if one is lucky.

While I had been occupied in the "blind" De Bruin had been scouting about the country. He reported having found a salt-lick within a short distance of a small pool, near which eland were fairly numerous. The eland is one of the few animals which I know reasonably well that I have never seen drinking. Many days have I spent in places where they abounded; not only did they not drink, but they never even came near the water-holes. With the double attraction of the salt-lick and the water I might, perhaps, have better luck; anyhow, it was worth trying. In thoughtful anticipation of my decision De Bruin had made a "blind" in what he believed to be the best position, and in this I spent a day, a day of disappointment, all the more keen because for many hours the eland were within sight, and it seemed as though they would surely come to either of the two attractions, both of which were within range of my camera. But no such luck; the only pleasure I had during the hours of waiting was watching the magnificent antelope feeding and sleeping, sometimes within a hundred and fifty yards of my "blind." There is, to me, something particularly fascinating about the eland, which are the largest of the antelope. They are such sturdy creatures. The cows and younger bulls are a soft, sandy colour, while the older bulls become a curious blue-grey, which makes them very inconspicuous when in the broken sunlight and shadow under trees.

De Bruin spent the day along the Guaso Nyiro hoping

to find a place where I could photograph hippo, but though he saw signs of the animals, there was nothing good enough to warrant my going there.

We left what we called Zebra Camp the following morning, heading in an easterly direction towards what is known as the Gold Mine. It was a very hard day's journey owing to the hilly and rocky nature of the latter part of the way. Game was abundant, more so than in any part of the country we had passed: oryx, zebra, giraffe, Grant's gazelle, and very large herds of eland; and I had an opportunity of watching a battle royal between two large bull eland. The striking of their massive horns and the thud of their heavy bodies could be heard distinctly. In vain did I try to get my camera ready in time to make a film of the scene, for the arrival of the whole safari gave the alarm to the rest of the herd, which numbered upwards of a hundred, and their rushing away made the two bulls pause for a moment; then, seeing the long line of oxen and men, they forgot their grievance and disappeared with the others.

The last part of the day's journey was along a rocky valley, which finally proved too much for the oxen owing to the many deep gullies, so they were halted and outspanned in a suitable place, while we continued for another mile and made camp. The scenery was really grand, for we were between high, boulder-covered mountains which formed a frame for a wonderful panorama of the valley of the Guaso

Nyiro, blue and misty in the heat-haze of the late afternoon. But why is there always something to mar the perfect place? Here we were in this beautiful scenery, and it was almost spoilt by a scourge of flies; and they were really a scourge. They covered everything. No sooner was the white table-cloth laid for a meal than it became a buzzing black mass. Soup was out of the question, as the plate was full of drowning, struggling flies before a mouthful could be taken. Everything had to be covered up, and eating *sans* flies became an art. The inside of the tent was black, and the only place where one could find comfort and peace was in the mosquito net, and then only after the odd dozens that came in uninvited had been disposed of. Strangely enough, all the flies of the district seemed to have collected in the camp; half a mile away there was only the usual number, not enough to cause comment or make life unbearable. Water was fairly abundant, but slightly salty and unpleasant to the taste.

Judging from the abundance of game, especially eland, it seemed worth while spending a few days in this neighbourhood, so I had several " blinds " made near likely-looking water-holes, and in these I spent two long days. During this time the only animals that came within photographic range were zebra, and they were not near enough to offer any real interest, and besides, I had all the film of them that was necessary. Eland came almost within range, and I got a few feet of film of them, but they remained just too far away to be interesting. I attributed

my bad luck to the fact that there were too many small water-holes in the river-bed, and of course the game preferred to go where there was no taint of the human scent. De Bruin made another trip to the Guaso Nyiro to see what chance there might be for hippo; he returned on the second day with the news that he had seen several of the big creatures in a shallow part of the river, and thought it would be worth while going there, as it was now only a day's journey away.

He was anxious that before going there I should spend one day after rhino, so accompanied by the camera bearers, we rode out to the rolling, grass-covered plains a few miles south-west of our camp. We had not gone far before we saw in the distance a group of three rhino standing on the top of a low hill. To reach them we had to make a wide detour so that we might approach up wind. The camera bearers and horse and mule were left in a valley, and De Bruin and I stalked the rhino. There was no cover, not a bush or tree, and the grass was so short that it offered no protection. Fortunately, these animals have very poor eyesight, and unless one is very conspicuous there is little chance of being seen at a distance of more than sixty or seventy yards.

Going slowly and silently, we walked uphill towards the three animals. They made a perfect group as they stood there against the sky, their dark grey bodies in strong relief to the rich golden yellow of the grass, and as good luck would have it the family was complete: a fine-looking bull and cow and

a youngster about half-grown. With the utmost caution we got nearer and nearer, the camera ready for immediate action and De Bruin ready with his small-bore rifle. I carried no weapon more deadly than the camera, because I did not want to have any temptation to shoot, even in self-defence. There had been a lot of controversy regarding hunting dangerous game with cameras, owing to the number of cases of shooting, with self-defence as the excuse for killing without a licence, and some of those interested in the question urged that camera hunters must have a licence. They even claimed that we made animals charge us so that we might have the excuse for shooting, as well as for the purpose of making exciting pictures. These people who objected to photographic hunting did not realize the value of the pictures, not only as records of animal life, but for advertising the country. I could not afford the luxury of a licence, and as I particularly wanted to *avoid* shooting, I was in a rather awkward position. If animals charged I must take my chance, as I was determined not to kill. Once before when two rhino had charged, *really* charged, not merely lumbering in our direction, my companion (for I was unarmed) had killed one when it was but a few yards away. I have had that brought up against me so often that, in spite of De Bruin's urging that I should be able to protect myself in case of necessity, I had left my rifle behind. With the three great beasts in front of me I wondered whether I had been wise. I do not mind one rhino, as it is possible to dodge if he charges,

but with three the gentle art of dodging becomes somewhat complicated. A cow with her calf is a very much more serious proposition than two or more full-grown ones, and a whole family has a way of making one feel somewhat uneasy.

When we got to within perhaps a hundred yards or so of the group my companion suggested that we were close enough. I exposed a short piece of film so as to be sure of something, and then very cautiously moved forward again. The wind was rather shifty, and eddies carried a suggestion of our scent towards the animals. The old bull stood as still as a statue, but the cow became mildly agitated and turned from side to side with her calf close by her side. The young have better eyesight than the older ones, and the comical little fellow could see that there was something strange, for he stared at us, evidently wondering what we were. During this first alarm we remained motionless. Then, as it subsided, I exposed another strip of film, which showed the animals somewhat larger in the picture, but still not nearly as large as I wanted. Once more the wind blew steadily towards us, and we moved forward a little farther. The youngster, thinking that his fears were groundless, lay down for a few moments, while the parents kept a careful watch. The bull had made no move for a long time, and was content to watch down wind, while his mate, more cautious, with the maternal instinct for the safety of her young, was constantly restless.

It was interesting to watch this group of great prehistoric-

" They made a perfect group "

" They swung round and round with tails held straight up as danger signals "

looking creatures, and note the peculiarities of the sexes and ages. Unfortunately, I found that while I was approaching from the safest direction, up wind, the grouping was no longer sufficiently concentrated for me, at this closer range, to include the three animals: the bull was too far from the others. To bring them within the field of the film it would be necessary to move some yards to one side. This sounds easy, of course, but it involved greater risk, owing to the direction of the wind; yet this risk had to be taken if I hoped to make a satisfactory picture, and with such a wonderful opportunity I felt that I must succeed in doing this, regardless of risk. Moving across the animals' line of vision, moreover, meant being extra cautious, as we were only about seventy yards away. So we went down on all fours, and dragging the cumbersome camera along, we moved twenty yards or more to one side and slightly farther forward. Then the camera had to be raised into position without making a sound. It was delicate work, but after a while I was ready once more, and again we went towards the great beasts, inch by inch, and I made some more pictures, this time with the three models posed in a nice compact group which delighted me. I am sure De Bruin thought me mad, even though he said nothing and stood by me without the least hesitation. Having exposed all the film I needed of the animals standing still, I stopped and waited for something to happen to give variety to the picture. The old bull thought, apparently, that he had a very fine profile; so he had, but having seen this

profile for nearly an hour I became somewhat tired of it, and I was about to suggest to my companion that we should make the animals move, when a current of air carried our scent the wrong way, and the old cow and her calf became greatly alarmed. In a comical way they swung round and round, with tails held straight up as danger signals. This gave me an opportunity for using more film, but it looked as though we were in for trouble.

Fortunately, the breeze changed again and peace was restored to the group, and still the father's profile remained unaltered as he stood there like a statue. The baby suddenly remembered that he had had nothing to eat for a long time, so he rushed to his mother and took what he wanted; by bad luck he chose the side away from us, so that I could not make a satisfactory picture of the feeding operation. When complete peace had been restored we were once more faced with the problem of producing action, and I suggested to De Bruin that he should fire a shot into the ground near the animals. This was bound to produce action, but the question was, which way would the action lead? If away from us, well and good; but if in our direction, what would we do? This point was brought home to me with great clearness when he said that the ammunition for his Mauser rifle was very uncertain; some of it was defective and it could not be relied on to carry any distance, and anyhow, with such a small-bore rifle, the chances of stopping a charging rhino were not noticeably great. With

splendid pluck he added that if I was willing to take the chance he had not the least objection. Personally, I do not mind saying that I was not at all willing, and had every possible objection to being charged by these monsters, two of which weighed about two tons apiece. I have always been given to understand that when a rhino charges the proper thing to do is to stand quite still (*if* you can) and wait until the animal is within three or four feet of you, and then jump lightly and without undue loss of time to one side, when he will pass you. It sounds quite easy, but I was not absolutely certain that it would work. We cannot always believe what we are told, and I hated to try any experiments; and, anyhow, the directions were for a single animal. No instructions had been given for dodging three! However, I wanted photographs of action, and so, without displaying the fear that possessed me, I asked De Bruin to go ahead and shoot. He did so, and the shot rang out with appalling suddenness. What a shock it gave to the three great beasts! They did not know what to do for a moment, but jumped about in a truly comical way, unable to make up their minds which direction to go, and then, of course, they chose the wrong one and headed straight for us. I was busy turning the handle and exposing film, even though my knees did shake in a painful way. It would not be long before I should have a chance of proving whether or not dodging would be effective. What was to happen to the camera I scarcely dared think. I was far too busy wondering what would happen to me.

But all my fears and worries were wasted, for the three frantic creatures suddenly turned for some unknown reason, and I got a splendid view of them disappearing with marvellous speed over the brow of the hill. Never have I enjoyed anything so much as photographing their tail view. To me it was a really beautiful picture. As I wiped the streaming perspiration from my brow, I could not help feeling that my good luck had not forsaken me, and I congratulated my staunch companion and asked him to forgive me for putting him deliberately into such an awkward position. He only laughed at this, and said he had enjoyed it thoroughly, and only hoped that the film would come out well. So did I.

We returned to camp tired, but more than satisfied with the day's work, and made our preparations for the trip to the Guaso Nyiro. The following morning we left camp at dawn with a light outfit and food sufficient for four or five days. The oxen were left behind, as we had a rough way before us. The horse and the mule had all they could do to scramble down among the boulders on the way down the steep hill-side which led to the plains two thousand feet below. Sure-footed little steinbuck gazed at us in surprise, then darted away among the rocks. Baboons made hideous noises from among the steep cliffs, and guinea-fowl, basking in the early sun, flew away at our approach.

Beyond this there was little life in the great gorges through which we wound our way, till at last we reached the more level

ground and made a short halt near a pool which promised well for photographic purposes. The rolling plains before us were, for the most part, covered with low-growing thorn trees, which I had reason to hate most thoroughly before the day passed. Up to now I have scarcely mentioned my mule, not because he was unworthy of mention, but because of other and more interesting topics. But on this particular day he was possessed of a fiendish desire to injure me that was even more than usually well developed. A more thoroughly objectionable brute never existed, and mules can be the most evil-minded creatures in the world. Their dispositions seem warped, and their greatest joy is to cause trouble. My mule appeared to have but one desire, and that was to tear me to pieces with thorns. He would be going along quite peacefully and apparently not thinking of anything, when suddenly, near a particularly thorny thorn-bush, he would, without a moment's warning, turn and *back* me into the thorns, so that I was powerless to act. The curved, claw-like thorns would catch my clothes and my hands and arms and, if I was not very careful, my face as well. Then, having got me well caught, the beast would bound forward, tearing my skin in a most painful way and ripping my clothes to pieces. In vain did I struggle with the brute. Nothing had any effect on him. In vain did I try to steer him so as to give a wide berth to the bushes, and in the end my only safeguard was to jump off at the critical moment, and be careful to avoid the kicks which were aimed at me in a most vicious and indiscriminate

manner. Never in my life have I ever hated any creature as I did that vile-tempered mule. Not a redeeming feature did he possess, save that he carried me many dreary, hot miles, when otherwise I should have been compelled to walk.

In the course of our journey northward we saw a fair amount of game; gerenuk were common, and in one place, where there was a large expanse of grass-land, we saw a mixed herd numbering some hundred animals of several species—giraffe, Grévy and common zebra, oryx, hartebeest and Grant's gazelle—all together. It was an interesting sight, but not one of which one could make pictures owing to the heat haze, which made everything tremble and indistinct.

We completed the twenty-mile trek before three o'clock, and I had a chance to look over the situation and see what hope there was of making pictures of hippo. Owing to very recent rains farther up country the river was much swollen, and the shallow stretch in which De Bruin had seen hippo walking was now many feet deep, so that the animals would not expose more than the top of their heads above water. I spent most of the next day watching by the bank of the river on the chance that I should see something, but without success. One hippo appeared, but only his eyes and nose were visible. In the afternoon I walked farther up the river, and found on some thick scrub-covered islands a number of Wandorobo[1]

[1] A primitive people, who have seldom any fixed abode, but wander about the country living chiefly on game and fish.

huts, and near them sufficient evidence to show that a large number of hippo had been killed. This accounted for the scarcity of the animals where formerly they were said to have been abundant. As the river was still rising, and the appearance of the sky in the neighbourhood of Kenya suggested that more rain was coming, I saw no object in remaining : with the coming of the rainy season, which was already overdue, the chances for my work would become less and less each day. Up to the present there had been rain locally in the Kenya neighbourhood, but nothing steady. From the many signs it was evident that rhino were fairly common, but we only saw one during the day, and he got our wind and moved off. Besides this, a few water-buck and monkeys were the only animals we saw in the vicinity of the camp.

During the night I was awakened from a sound sleep by the snorting of some animal very close to my tent. Leaving my bed, I peered out and saw De Bruin watching something. The moon was nearly full, so that it was almost like daylight. " Hippo," said my companion, as I saw a big, light-grey mass scarcely thirty yards away. " Rhino," I replied, as I picked up some stones. A rhino is as inquisitive as he is stupid, and it would be exactly like one of these beasts to rush through the camp and make a mess of everything ; so, in my pyjamas, I ran towards the great beast, shouting loudly and throwing stones at him. What he thought I was there is no telling, but he went off at full speed, crashing through the bushes in an

amusing way. For a long time we could hear the frightened creature putting as much distance as he could in the shortest space of time between himself and the strange and noisy apparition in pink and white. I feel almost certain that if you can only frighten rhino before they frighten you they will almost invariably turn tail without waiting to argue about it.

On the way south, towards our camp in the mountains, I made several attempts to secure films of herds of zebra with the snow-capped peaks of Kenya in the distance. To the eye it was a beautiful picture, but the delicate colours defeated the camera, and the mountain was scarcely visible on the film.

The heat of that march was so intense that I was glad to reach the shady water-hole at the base of the rocky mountain, and decided to stay for the night on the chance of being able to get pictures of the baboons that were accustomed to drink there.

I have never had any luck with baboons, in spite of their being so common. On account of their hated and cunning enemy the leopard, they are extremely wary, and are never, I believe, without a regular system of outposts and sentries. To outwit their remarkable system requires the greatest care, combined with good luck. Baboons are absolutely dependent on water at regular intervals, so that wherever they are found there is certain to be water not very far away. It may be in some well-concealed hole among rocks, but it is somewhere within their reach. It is very doubtful whether they can go more than forty-eight hours without drinking.

"The snow-capped peaks of Kenya in the distance"

The baboons were very numerous in the hills, and I believe they must have watched me building my "blind," for though I made it with particular care, knowing what keen eyes they have, not one came near, either that evening or the following day; neither did any of the impala or other animals which frequented the neighbourhood. But though I had no luck with animals, the time was not altogether wasted, as I found out one reason why birds are so very nervous when approaching water. I had noticed that fact in many places, especially when the stagnant water was fairly deep. Doves of several sorts were the most frequent visitors to the water-hole I was watching. They would alight on the near-by trees or rocks and sit there for some time, then gradually come nearer and nearer the water, but some would invariably keep a look-out while the others drank. Long, snake-like heads appeared above the surface of the water, then vanished without making even a ripple. They were snapping turtles of remarkable size, and once, while I was watching a bird drinking, there was a sudden splash and the bird disappeared, caught by the turtle. It all happened so quickly that, unfortunately, I had no time to use the camera to record this interesting event; but what I had seen solved the question of the birds' timidity in drinking.

Nothing further occurred to interest me during the day, so I returned to camp just before dark, and packed up ready for an early start next day. While the oxen were being inspanned

and the men were making up their loads, I went on ahead, hoping to shoot some guinea-fowl, as we were very short of food. I had not gone far before I saw a flock of the birds in some open ground near a gully. To get within shot it was necessary to crawl behind a low ledge of rocks. Scarcely had I proceeded a dozen yards when for some unaccountable reason I glanced at the ground immediately in front of me. To my horror I saw, directly in front of me and not four feet away, a very large snake, coiled and half buried in the sand and ready to strike. Had I crawled forward another arm's length the creature would have struck me in the face, and the result would have been fatal. Considering how very scarce poisonous snakes are in Africa (I have not seen a dozen in my three trips), it was rather remarkable that I should have almost crawled on to this one. Under the circumstances I think I was fully justified in dispatching this particular reptile without loss of time.

De Bruin said I ought to have a try for lion, which were fairly numerous in a district through which we would pass on our way back to Nanyuki. I had brought with me an elaborate outfit for cinema work at night, and being particularly anxious to make a film of lion, I agreed readily to his suggestion.

Camp was made near a small water-hole not far from which was a rock-covered knoll, just the sort of place where lions would live. Some bait was secured and brought to where we made a "blind." Then the flare-lights were arranged with great care, so that, by pressing a button in the "blind," all of

From a painting by the Author

Lion at a drinking pool

them would be electrically ignited at the same instant. What the lion would do I had not the slightest idea, but I hoped they would be so dazed by the powerful light that for a few moments they would not move. After that they would probably vanish with the greatest possible speed.

Everything was in readiness before nightfall, and we took our places, hoping that we were in for an interesting night. The chief thing I remember about that night was the cold, which was so intense that, in spite of blankets and heavy clothing, our teeth chattered. Only once, about midnight, did we hear the mighty roar of a lion, and then it was in the distance; but the weird cries of both the striped and spotted hyena began at dark and continued till daylight. Several times the stealthy creatures came prowling about, and when some of both species were at the kill I was sorely tempted to fire the flashes; but I wanted lion, and who could tell at what moment they might come? The flash, once fired, there would be an end to any further chance for the night, so unfortunately I resisted the temptation. I say unfortunately because no lion came, and I missed an opportunity of getting an interesting piece of film. The hyena, being extremely cowardly creatures, would probably have died of fright had the flash gone off. This was the first and only time I have ever seen the two species of hyena together.

A great change in the weather had occurred during the past day or two. The sky was clouded over, and everything

pointed to the coming of the rainy season. Should this occur before our return there would be endless trouble getting through with the ox-wagon; not only would the river be too high, but the roads, most of which were through cotton soil, would be almost impassable, so I dared not wait another day to try again for lion.

The journey back was uneventful. Game was very scarce, in fact, excepting a large leopard, we saw nothing of particular interest. During the long ride I got a touch of sun which made life anything but a joy. It is curious that the weather when it is cloudy seems so much more dangerous than when the sun is shining. On May 12th we reached Nanyuki after the most productive three weeks, from the photographic standpoint, that I have ever had. This success was very largely due to De Bruin, whose untiring energy, good nature and careful management made him as good a companion as any man could wish. My only regret was that our trip together had ended, for after this I was to go alone.

CHAPTER VIII

LEFT NANYUKI—RETURNED TO NAIROBI AND STARTED ON LAST PART OF TRIP — EXPERIENCE WITH BUFFALO ON DONYA SABUK — MET THREE RHINO — UNSUCCESSFUL VISIT TO YATTA PLAINS — TO THE TANA RIVER FOR HIPPOPOTAMUS

OWING to the rains, which had at last begun in an intermittent way, I was unable to leave Nanyuki for a week, as all motors had been held up by the condition of the cotton soil between us and Nyeri. In the end I decided to start with De Bruin, who was to take my outfit to Thika, while I went to Nairobi in order to develop my film; naturally enough I was most anxious to see the results of my recent trip. Two days' trekking brought us to Nyeri, where a motor was procured to take me to Nairobi. The roads were in a shocking condition. Several times it was touch-and-go whether we would get through, but we were lucky, more so than many cars which we passed hopelessly bogged in the mud. Two days of difficult going finally brought us to Nairobi, where once more I saw the Martin Johnsons and took advantage of their kindness. Developing the film was almost as exciting as the making of them had been, and my delight and satisfaction were boundless when I saw the thousands of feet of film come out as bright and clear as if they had been exposed in a well-appointed studio.

Martin Johnson, with true sporting spirit, seemed to be almost as much pleased as I was.

After five days in Nairobi I started on the last part of my trip. For this I had decided to go first to Thika to collect my outfit and men; then to Donya Sabuk for buffalo; from there across the Yatta Plains till I reached the Tana River somewhere near Seven Forks. Rhino should be found on the plains and hippo in the Tana. Other animals also would probably be found near the river. By which route I would come back must depend on circumstances. The journey would be from two hundred and fifty to three hundred miles from camp to camp; that is to say, apart from all side trips, which would bring the total up to about nearly four hundred and fifty miles. To do this I had less than a month. A car was out of the question owing to expense, and I dared not take either a horse or mule, for fear of fly in the Tana region. It meant, therefore, going on foot, with an average march of sixteen or eighteen miles each day. The prospect was not very alluring, particularly as a good deal of the time would be spent in low country where the heat would be very trying. I wished sincerely that I had been a few years younger.

Thanks to the courtesy of that splendid man, Sir Northrup McMillan (whose recent death has been such a great blow to all who had the privilege of knowing him), I was allowed to camp on the slopes of Donya Sabuk, and make my fourth attempt to photograph the buffalo that live on this wonderfully beautiful

From a painting by the Author

African buffalo

mountain. On previous occasions I had camped below the actual mountain, which meant that each day I had the hard task of climbing the steep slopes. This time, however, I placed the camp near a small stream on the western slope nearly half-way up, and as near to the haunts of the buffalo as I dared go without risk of disturbing them. My tent was pitched in a delightful spot under a large spreading thorn tree within a few feet of a tiny stream of clear, cold spring water, and within a few yards of a patch of thick forest. Below stretched the Athi Plains, gold, as though covered with ripe wheat. Far away in the haze was Nairobi, and beyond and farther to the east the outline of the Aberdare Mountain could be dimly seen. Above the camp the mountain rose abruptly to a height of seven thousand and forty-one feet, a mass of golden grass and clumps of richly-coloured forest.

The morning after our arrival I was up and breakfasting while the country was still lost in the gloom that precedes the dawn, for I wanted to reach the home of the buffalo as soon as possible after sunrise. It was a hard climb up the steep slopes, where the dew-soaked grass was more than waist-high. As the sun rose we reached a trail that I remembered, but the thick mist made it impossible for us to go farther for fear of coming unexpectedly on buffalo. For three hours we sat waiting in the intense cold for the mist to clear; but at last, at about nine o'clock, the powerful sun came through and slowly the surrounding land came into view, and we were able to move

forward along the deep-cut animal trail. We were forced to proceed very slowly and with extreme caution, examining carefully the high grass on either side and the edge of the dark forest where buffalo, scarcely visible in the deep shade of the thick foliage, might be standing.

At ten-thirty, while we were making our way between two spurs of forest, I saw in a small valley below us several buffalo. This was about where I had expected and hoped to find them, as there was a muddy water-hole in which they were accustomed to wallow. The slight breeze was very shifty, so to make sure of its direction I lit a cigarette and watched the smoke as, with camera ready, I made my way very carefully down the slope through tangled grass and weeds and over concealed stones. I felt sure that the few animals I had first seen, which were now concealed from me by some trees, were part of a large herd ; but where the others were I could not tell. Behind me was the forest, a spur of which continued on my right about thirty yards away, down almost to the bottom of the valley where the animals had been seen. Had I dared I would have skirted close to the edge of this forest, but it would have been asking for trouble, as some of the herd were almost sure to be among the trees.

After some long and painful moments spent in the attempt to move without making any noise, I managed to get to within eighty yards of where I knew the pool to be. My next move was to work sideways, until the animals were in sight. This

I proceeded to do, until at last I saw a great black body showing clearly against the light grass. He was not looking in my direction, and seemed entirely unsuspicious, so I moved still farther and one after another the splendid creatures came into view.

I had just reached a point where I could see the edge of the muddy pool in which the head of a buffalo was visible, and was about to begin photographing, when the stillness of the morning was rudely broken by a crashing of bushes directly behind me. What I felt like cannot be described, for it was literally a case of being between two fires, or rather between two herds of the most savage beasts in the world; and I did not know what to do. The herd behind had evidently come on our fresh scent, hence their alarm and their sudden rush through the forest; which way they were coming was not certain, but it sounded very much as though they were headed in my direction. The instinct to make photographs was very strong in me, and fearing that the new-comers would disturb the others and cause them to vanish, I quickly focused my camera and began turning the handle, at the same time keeping my rifle ready in case of trouble. Knowing that Sir Northrup objected to the animals being killed, I determined to avoid firing a shot unless it became absolutely necessary.

The herd of new-comers did not come out in the open, so there was no way of knowing their number; but from the noise they made there seemed to be fifteen or twenty at least, and these, crashing through the undergrowth, kept inside the

spur of the forest that was on my right, passing me within forty yards or so. That they did pass was reason for great satisfaction, as it meant that they would join the other herd; these, being unsuspicious, would perhaps tend to quiet the new lot. On the other hand, there was a chance that the alarm would quickly spread with the arrival of the new-comers. What actually happened, however, was a compromise between the two possibilities. The smaller herd that had been so badly alarmed quieted down when they came to where some of the large herd were standing about in the forest. But they continued to move, slowly, to the edge of the thick cover, and then one by one came out in the open and mingled with those that were feeding and wallowing.

Animals have strange ways of imparting information, and evidently news was given that a fresh and very suspicious scent had been found up on the hill, with the unfortunate result that the entire herd began to move away, slowly but surely. As this was a wonderful opportunity for photographing the buffalo under almost perfect conditions, for the composition left nothing to be desired, even though the light was none too good, I determined to chance moving forward a little in order that I might obtain a better view. I therefore went ahead about twenty yards in the open, and placing the camera in position, secured a film of some eighty of the splendid creatures as they passed slowly from the valley, up the side of the hill, towards the dense forest on the farther side.

"Among the herd were several very large bulls with unusually fine horns"

It was a magnificent sight, one of the finest I have ever seen of wild animals, for among the herd were several very large bulls with unusually fine horns; there were also cows with their calves of various sizes, and one old cow, having been disturbed while wallowing, passed fairly near, with the wet mud still clinging to her.

The danger seemed now to have passed, as the animals showed no evidence of alarm. But suddenly, with no apparent reason, seven of the leading lot decided to investigate my side of the valley, and left the others, which were now standing about as though waiting for further instructions. My position once more struck me as being, to put it mildly, unpleasant. I was in the open, with no cover save the short grass, and therefore a decidedly conspicuous object in the landscape. If I moved to the protection of the forest it would mean attracting the attention of every member of the herd, a thing I was not at all keen to do. The investigating seven came towards me in short rushes, between which they stopped and threw up their massive heads in a way that promised trouble, and trouble, too, of a very serious nature. Occasionally their ill-temper was vented on unoffending bushes and weeds, which they tore up with their curved horns; occasional snorts, too, were added to make sure that I should feel uncomfortable, and I did, thoroughly.

Between me and the seven there was a small ridge behind which ran a shallow gully. The animals disappeared for a time

in this depression, and I was about to take advantage of the situation to run back to cover, when several of the main herd swung round and started in my direction. Any idea of changing my position then vanished promptly. Soon the seven trouble-seekers re-appeared very much closer, perhaps forty or fifty yards away, and they seemed appallingly large and dangerous. Coming to the high ground of the knoll, they stopped and stared at me in a way that was most disconcerting. With the corner of my eye I glanced at the forest, not daring to turn my head or make any move, and wondered how long it would take me to cover the distance in case of emergency. I do not know what the record is for a sixty-yard dash, but felt sure that I could beat it if the buffalo decided to come. By good luck they decided against any forward move; perhaps my appearance was not in my favour, but be that as it may, after a prolonged look, accompanied by several snorts, they all turned and rejoined the main herd, which, to my relief, scampered off into the forest and was immediately lost to view.

In some ways the experience had been disappointing, chiefly because it was so nearly successful. Had it not been for that herd coming behind us I should have been able to make a really interesting film of the herd in and near the wallow, a subject that I had always hoped to be able to get. But the opportunity had gone, thanks to the unexpected interruption, which had happened at the exact moment when it would do most harm. This is an example of the sort of thing that so

often occurs in camera hunting, and tests the patience and perseverance of those who would photograph wild animals.

This somewhat exciting episode having ended, the question was what next to do. To follow the herd into the forest was useless, as they would be so keenly on the alert, after the recent experience, that stalking them would be impossible; and, even in the event of my being able to do so, they could not be photographed in the deep shade of the forest. I decided that the best way would be to take up a good position which would command a clear view of the water-hole, on the chance of the herd, or others, coming to it during the day. The place I selected was on the hill-side about eighty yards from the pool. A belt of thick bush was a few yards behind me, and at the back of this was the forest into which the buffalo had disappeared.

For an hour or two, beyond the songs of the birds, there was little to disturb the mountain quiet. Occasionally the crackling of branches could be heard, and showed that the animals were still in the vicinity, though not very near. Later the sounds of moving bodies reached our ears as several buffalo moved cautiously through the forest behind us. Whether they were some of the large herd or another lot we could not tell. Once or twice we could see the bushes shaking, as some animals made their way between us and the forest. Of the animals themselves we could see nothing.

Naturally enough we were all in a state of suspense, as there was no telling at what moment the herd would emerge from the

cover and be almost on top of us. My camera bearers were very keen, but, like myself, they were somewhat nervous. I have never met anyone who really enjoyed being near buffalo.

After a while all sounds ceased, and we thought, of course, that the herd had gone. It was after two o'clock, so I decided to have some lunch. Scarcely had I taken a mouthful of my simple fare when there was a terrific crashing among the bushes immediately behind us. I dropped the food and grabbed my rifle, just as a great black head, crowned with long, gracefully-curved horns, came into view about fifteen or twenty yards away. It was a wonderful sight, but not one to inspire any feeling of joy. Frankly I was frightened almost to death, and so were the men. We all wanted to crouch low and hide in the grass, but still we wanted to be able to keep our eyes on that monster who had arrived at such an inopportune moment. The camera, which was standing on its tripod close to me, was annoyingly conspicuous, and seemed bound to attract the animal's attention. For several minutes there was not a sound; then the suspense came to an abrupt end, as the great beast rushed forward down the hill directly towards us; but by good luck he swerved slightly to one side, although he passed so close that, up to the last moment, we all expected to be trampled on. I was sorely tempted to shoot, but refrained, in the hope that all would go well and I would even have a chance to use the camera. The incredible speed of the bull as he ran past made it impossible to swing the machine and focus rapidly enough

to get a picture until he had gone over a hundred yards away, so I failed to secure what I wanted. The noise made by the big creature gave the alarm to the rest of the herd, which had been on the edge of the forest, evidently waiting till the one we had seen had made sure that all was safe before venturing out. The crashing of bushes could now be heard as they went back some distance into the protection of the forest, after which they swung round to join their leader, keeping under cover all the time.

As they had received two frights within a few hours there was not the least chance of doing anything more with them, and our only hope lay in finding another herd. With this object in view we crossed the top of the mountain and examined all the open glades with the greatest care, but without seeing anything more interesting than forest tracks. These we decided to follow, and for an hour or two we made our way cautiously along the endless trails leading through the forest. Frankly speaking, I do not enjoy searching for buffalo in dense woods. The animals are very difficult to see, and have an unpleasant habit of lying down to one side of their trails, in order to be able to see any enemy coming.

Once we came to a large wallow which had been used very recently. In all probability a sentry had seen us and had taken the herd with him shortly before we came to the pool. Later, we almost stumbled on seven or eight buffalo lying under some thick bushes in a very dark, shady place. We only discovered them as they jumped to their feet when we were within a few

yards of the nearest one. It was a question whether we or they were the more startled. In an instant they were off, tearing their way through the tangled undergrowth with a noise like a miniature cyclone. It was an unfortunate incident, because they followed the trail which we had to take in order to get back to camp, and would, of course, give the alarm to any animals that might be along the line of their flight.

There was nothing to do but to return to camp. The sun was getting low, and we would have to keep moving if we wished to avoid being caught in the forest when darkness set in, and I am sure the men were quite as anxious as I was that this should not happen. The sun, red as fire, was setting beyond the hills of Nairobi, and the Athi Plains, already in shadow, were almost purple in colour, when we came within sight of the camp, and as we arrived the last glow of the evening light touched the top of Donya Sabuk. The day had been a long one, exciting and very tiring, and I felt completely exhausted after the strenuous climbing. I had not recovered entirely from the effects of gas received during the war, and feared that the hard exercise would bring on a heart attack. My fears were well founded, and unfortunately I was laid up for the next two days, and had all I could do to get my courage up to the point of continuing the journey. Climbing the mountain was quite out of the question for some time to come, but I planned to make another attempt after the buffalo on my way back from the Tana.

After crossing the Athi River we went southward between

that and the Thika River for a day and a half, and then branched off in an easterly direction across the Yatta Plains. The open country was remarkably dry, for the rains, which had lasted but a short time, had not extended to this district. Thick, dry grass made walking very tiring. Water was so scarce that we had the utmost difficulty in finding sufficient for our needs. Game, too, was scarce, and beyond a few hartebeest and an occasional Grant's gazelle we saw nothing. This was extremely disappointing, as I had hoped to find plenty of rhino. Formerly these plains contained a great many of them, but apparently they had suffered from sportsmen, who could reach this district by motor in a single day from Nairobi. In vain did I scan the country from every high point.

This was disheartening. To remain in the district was a useless waste of time, so, after hearing from several Wakamba herders that they seldom saw any sign of rhino, I decided to work towards the Tana River. My plans were somewhat upset, as I had intended remaining on the plains for several days while I sent all the available porters back to a place near Donya Sabuk for posho (maize meal, which furnishes the men's food). Owing to the necessity for economy, I was using the minimum number of porters, and would be compelled to work a relay system, making stores at given points, which would be within reach of wherever I happened to be. From local information I gathered that we would find water at a certain point on the way to the Tana, so some men were sent back for the necessary food supplies with

instructions to come to this last camp and there await a guide whom we would send back when we had established ourselves near the Tana. As soon as the men had been sent off we started, expecting to do the trip to the river in two days of easy marching. But the plans and hopes were not to be realised, for harder marching I have seldom seen. The grass, in most parts, was several feet high, and so dense that I had to tear a way through for the heavily-laden porters.

Shortly after noon we arrived at the water-hole of which we had been told, and found it to be bone dry. The day was one of the hottest I can remember, and we were all thoroughly tired and much disgusted at our bad luck. We had done seven hours of hard marching, and whatever happened we must continue until water was found. On the chance that there might be a pool somewhere along the bed of the small stream we decided to keep near it, following its course until we reached the Tana, which I judged to be about twelve miles away. Twelve miles is not far when you start out fresh, but for a very tired lot of men, who had already done eighteen or twenty miles, the prospect was not a pleasant one. However, there was nothing else for us to do, and the men were most good-natured about it; after a short rest they put their sixty-pound loads on their heads and off we went. In order to find the easiest way for the men I went some distance ahead, with two men acting as a sort of connecting-file to whom I could signal any change in the route. We had gone about six miles, when suddenly I heard the petulant

snort of a rhino directly ahead; unfortunately, the wind was behind us, and it had carried our scent forward to the animal. I was going up a low hill at the time, through deep grass, so that my range of vision was not more than thirty or forty yards. For a moment I stopped to listen and, if possible, see where the rhino might be. Suddenly, without further warning, three great beasts appeared over the brow of the hill, coming rapidly towards me, according to their usual habit of working up-wind when alarmed. Should they continue in their present course we would soon meet face to face, a most unpleasant prospect. I looked in vain for a bush behind which I could hide, but there was nothing but grass; for a moment I thought of hiding by lying down, but that was out of the question, as I should be trampled on. A shot might turn them, but then I did not want to shoot; and still they came on, two cows and a bull, one of the cows with the longest horns I had ever seen.

If only the wind had been the other way there would have been a wonderful chance to use the camera, but under the existing conditions there was no time to think of photographing; my mind was otherwise occupied, as the terrifying trio were in a thoroughly bad humour. Their sleep had been disturbed by the awful scent of man, and they were out to see what they could do about it. The time came when it seemed that shooting would be not only necessary but fully justified, and I was about to throw the rifle to my shoulder, as the nearest of the three was scarcely a dozen yards away, when, for no apparent reason,

she turned slightly to one side and, at unpleasantly close range, rushed past me. The other two, of course, followed, and I was left alone, delighted to see the last of them, and very glad that I had not fired a shot. By good luck the course taken by the rhino was some distance from the safari, otherwise there might have been trouble.

A line of loaded porters appears to have a curious effect on rhino. It seems to touch their sense of humour, as the men rush about in every direction, dropping their loads with a total disregard for the contents. When there happens to be a tree in the vicinity there is the keenest competition among the men for the higher branches, and if the charging rhino is close enough, the men would put a monkey to shame by the speed with which they climb.

Such scenes are interesting and most amusing to watch, provided one does not have a personal interest in the contents of the loads. I find that photographic equipment, however carefully packed, is not improved by being thrown down by porters or thrown up by rhino.

In the course of this day's march we saw astonishingly little game : only a couple of giraffe and a very few hartebeest, zebra and impala, and most of these within a mile or two of the Tana. We did not see the river itself until nearly five o'clock, when we had done about eleven hours of steady marching. I was sorry for the men, who, though thoroughly tired, acted very well. I explained to them that such a long

march was not intentional on my part, but was due to the incorrect information given to us by the Wakamba.

The Tana, I was sorry to find, was very full, most of the bars and rocks on which hippo might take their sun-baths were under water, so that the prospects were bad so far as hippo were concerned. When I had visited this river many years ago I found them very numerous at a place a short distance below where the Thika joined the Tana. On the following morning, therefore, I determined to go there and see what the conditions might be now. How far it was there was no way of telling, as we did not know at what point we had come to the Tana. For four hours we kept on our way up-stream, following so far as possible the paths made by animals along the banks of the river, through tangles of bushes, open glades and under the welcome shade of large trees; we saw nothing of the hippo, except many old tracks and occasionally a fresh one.

Even at the pool in which I had once counted over forty of the queer old creatures there was not one to be seen. On the bank their bones were scattered about, which explained in a sad way the absence of the animals themselves. One of my porters told me he had seen a white man shoot over a dozen at this place during one day. He had, so the porter said, made no attempt to get any of the bodies ashore. It was just a case of slaughter for slaughter's sake. As hippo are slow breeders, such destruction means that the wretched creatures are wiped out of a district completely. Needless to say, I was very nearly

discouraged, as I was particularly anxious to make a good film of hippo.

Other animals, near the river, were fairly numerous, especially water-buck and impala, and it looked as though I would have to console myself with these.

On my way back to camp I examined the country with great care in the hope of finding suitable places for "blinds." Near a river this is always rather difficult, owing to the great number of places where the animals can drink. As a rule they are somewhat reluctant about coming to the edge of the actual river for fear of crocodile, which abound in the Tana, but there are many small gullies, shallow and safe, and these are generally used by the smaller animals. I found one shallow pool, a few yards away from the river, which promised well, as the ground surrounding the water was well trampled by the hoofs of various antelope, and there was a high bank, commanding a perfect view of the gully, and on it a "blind" could be made with very little trouble. Before devoting any time to the antelope, however, it seemed advisable to investigate the river farther down, and see if any hippo were there.

With the promise of a suitable reward for satisfactory information, three men were given instructions to go down the river as far as was necessary, and to return as soon as they found anything worth reporting, while I spent a day several miles below the camp where there were a few hippo tracks. Beyond a few water-buck, I saw nothing. In this way two valuable

"When I had visited this river many years ago, I found them very numerous"

days were wasted. I was most anxious that the stay in the Tana district should be as short as possible, as the mosquitoes were so bad that the men would be certain to go down with fever. Ticks, too, made life almost unbearable. I have never seen these pests so bad in any place, and I dreaded the possibility of getting spirilum fever, which is carried by a certain species of tick that is found near the Tana.

The next day, being discouraged at the poor prospects of finding hippo, I went, very early in the morning, to the pool I had found previously and made a hiding-place. Better settings for a film would be difficult to find: all that it needed was that the animals should be there. For several hours I sat waiting and hoping. A pair of beautiful bush buck came by, but they did not stop to drink and remained all the time among the bushes, so that I had no opportunity of photographing them. They are very shy and solitary creatures, and one seldom obtains more than a glimpse of them at close quarters, as they usually spend their time in more or less dense cover, where stalking is difficult and photography almost impossible. So far I have never seen more than two together; more often they appear to go alone.

Several times during the morning green monkeys came and chattered among themselves in the trees about me. Evidently they wanted to come to the water-hole, but were afraid. They live in constant fear of leopards, and are extremely cautious. I once saw a leopard spring for one just as the little creature reached the lower branch of a tree: it escaped by scarcely a fraction of an inch.

After many attempts and much conversation, a small party of about twenty monkeys came to the tree overhanging the pool, and then one, more daring, or more thirsty, than the rest, dropped from branch to branch until at last he reached the roots of the tree that were exposed on the side of the bank; he was still several yards from the water, and for a long time he could not make up his mind to risk getting down to the ground. Might not a leopard be lying concealed in the grass on the overhanging bank, or behind one of the rocks, or even under the tangle of roots on which he sat? The very thought made the nervous little creature start and rush half-way up the tree again. Before long his thirst got the better of him, and once more he came down, this time on to the ground, within a yard or so of the water. One more look from the top of a protruding rock, then down went his head to the water, and he drank, not deeply, only a short sip, and again he went to the top of the look-out rock. All seemed safe, so once more he drank. Then others came, young and old, funny little black-faced things, and older ones still, with almost white fronts and with frill-like whiskers, but all with black faces. Some would stand on a rock with tail erect, then, light as thistledown, bound away to the safety of the tree. But all the time the scouts were out, sitting quietly on projecting branches from which they would keep a good look-out; eternal vigilance was, to them, the price of life. It was interesting to watch them and their amusing antics, as they played games, drank and lived their lives quite unconscious

of being watched and photographed; for, of course, the camera was recording the scene. Beautifully-coloured butterflies also came to drink and added interest to the picture, though they scarcely showed in the photographs.

For about an hour the monkeys were within sight of my hiding-place; then, having satisfied their thirst, they moved away in search of food among the high branches of the trees.

Not for long was I left alone; before the monkeys had been gone half an hour I saw in the distance some animals moving about in the high grass. They proved to be water-buck, a small party of five does, three old ones and two not quite fully grown. Slowly they were coming towards the water, when, if luck was with me, I would have perhaps a chance of photographing them. I hoped so, for though in the past I had tried by every means in my power, I had never succeeded in making a picture of them nearer than about a hundred yards. Breathlessly I waited, as the five does came along, feeding and keeping a sharp look-out as they came. For no apparent reason they suddenly took fright and trotted off, and it seemed as though they had gone for good. But no; they ran scarcely twenty yards, then stopped, and after a few minutes came in single file through the grass, and were soon within thirty yards of the camera, which was being used with great care. Any sound would have betrayed my whereabouts, for, like all antelope, the water-buck has extremely keen hearing. For a short time they were out of sight as they passed behind some bushes; then, with delight, I saw them

walk down the bank and along the red clay river-bed. No picture could be taken of them actually coming towards me, as one of the five, an old doe, had stopped and was staring intently at my hiding-place. The slightest move would have been fatal; I must wait until she looked in some other direction. Several times she turned her head for a moment, but just as I was about to turn the handle of the camera she would move her head and stare at me in a way that showed only too clearly that my hiding-place, though most carefully made, had aroused her suspicions. In the meanwhile a wonderful opportunity was being wasted; the four water-buck were actually drinking, and only about eighteen yards away, and yet I dared not photograph them. If looks could have killed that doe would have dropped dead where she stood; but I had to pit my patience against hers, as there was nothing else to do.

At last, after what seemed hours, but was probably only a few seconds, the inquisitive doe, deciding that my "blind" was harmless, lowered her head and came forward, and as she began to drink I turned the handle and secured one of the best pieces of film I have ever made. Unfortunately, it was but a short piece, as by ill-luck, from the tree over my head a monkey, unnoticed by me, had been watching the whole proceedings. When he saw me turn the handle he stopped still for a moment just to satisfy his curiosity, as he had never seen a cinema machine before, and then, without more ado, he screamed forth his call of warning, and the water-buck, asking no questions, vanished

"As she began to drink I turned the handle"

My feelings towards that monkey were scarcely kindly, but, after all, he had done his duty. He believed there was danger, and he had given the warning; and nearly all wild animals obey, without question, any alarm note from another creature, whether of their own kind or not. Of course, I was delighted with my good luck, even though the opportunity had been so very brief, but had it not been for the monkey I should have secured a far more interesting film, as the end of the picture showed the water-buck in a frightened rush away from the pool, instead of going quietly.

It was almost dark when the men, who had been sent after hippo, returned to camp. Their news was anything but satisfactory. Only two of the animals had been seen, in a part of the river about two hours' walk from where we were. Nothing had been seen farther down. I determined, therefore, to try for the two that had been seen, and in the early morning started with full equipment of cameras but with very little hope of success. About seven miles down river we found the hippo, five of them instead of two, but in a very long, deep pool, which offered little chance for the camera. I made a rough hiding-place, put the cinema machine in readiness, and sat down to wait, after sending men down farther to see if there was anything of interest.

Watching hippo in deep water can scarcely be considered exciting, but for five hours I did this, and made some rather long-range film of the queer heads whenever they appeared within reach. Sometimes all five would be visible; that is to say, their noses, eyes and ridiculous little wriggling pink ears

would show above water. Then, after a series of deep-booming grunts, all would disappear silently, without making a ripple on the oily water, to bob up again in four or five minutes at the other end of the long pool. But there was no indication of their going ashore. They never even went near the one ledge of rock that offered a suitable place for a sun-bath. There is one thing that I have never been able to understand about these strange amphibious creatures : they seem to be able to remain absolutely stationary in swift, running water with no apparent effort, even though the water is far too deep for them to touch bottom. Presumably, their short legs are kept in constant motion, but no sign of it appears ; in vain have I examined their bodies, or what little could be seen of them, for any evidence of muscular movement.

Late in the afternoon the camera bearers returned without having seen any sign of hippo, though they had followed the river for several miles. Evidently my trip to the Tana, where I had come especially for hippo photographs, was not going to prove successful. On the way back to camp we saw one old creature, but only for a brief moment, as it slipped into the water from a low bush-covered bank a few feet away from me.

Years ago, before men carried out their work of destruction, the hippo used to spend several hours every day sleeping on the rocks or banks ; but now they have learned to avoid showing themselves, and apparently the old custom has gone for good. Now if they come ashore during the daytime they seek places where trees or high grass protect them completely from view.

The following day was spent in my hiding-place where I had seen the five water-buck, but I had no luck. Things were not going well, and I was not getting the pictures I needed. After serious consideration I decided that before leaving this part of the river I ought to have one more try for hippo; but though the river was examined carefully both up and down for many miles, not a single one was seen. Finding that they had been discovered, the small herd had taken themselves off to some place still farther away. The only thing of interest that I saw when examining the river was a gigantic crocodile, by far the largest I have ever seen. The monster was lying asleep on a sandy bank on the opposite side of the river, which at this point was nearly a hundred yards wide. At first I thought it was a large tree-trunk, as it seemed far too big for a crocodile. As soon as I realised what it was I got out the camera and my longest focus lens, but as ill-luck would have it some part of the mechanism jammed and several valuable minutes were spent in getting it clear. The animal must have heard the sound, for just as everything was ready he walked with astonishing speed, not into the river as one would have expected, but up the bank, and disappeared among the bushes. This is the only time that I have seen a crocodile take to the land when alarmed. So large was the creature that with a seventeen-inch lens the footprints in the sand were of quite appreciable size on the film. The porters said it was a much larger one than they had ever seen before, and must be the father of all the crocs in Africa.

It was only too evident that my hope of making film of hippo was not to be fulfilled, for which I was extremely sorry, as they are, in their own way, interesting creatures, and the day is not far distant when they will become exceedingly scarce in all accessible parts of Kenya. There are three reasons for this. First, and most important, is the fact of their bad habit of destroying crops. Any animal which does harm to man's belongings is doomed, and the hippo is one of the worst offenders. A single animal will destroy by eating or trampling several acres of grain or other crop in one night, while a herd of half a dozen does untold damage. As a rule, the crops may be protected by the most flimsy of fences or even by a cord on which pieces of white cloth or jingling tin are suspended, but the native will not take these precautions. The animals do not confine their efforts only to the crops in the immediate vicinity of the lakes and rivers, but will frequently go many miles in search of their favourite food. The second reason is that there are quite a number of men, and even women, who consider it sport to shoot, or I should say " pot," hippo. Why, it is difficult to understand. There is no sportsmanship required beyond ordinary target work; there is no trophy to bring home as evidence of one's " skill " save the huge teeth, not objects of beauty, surely!

The third and perhaps the most difficult kind of destruction to prevent is the killing done by the natives; silent arrows are used which do not betray the whereabouts of the hunter. These arrows are dipped in powerful poison, so that wherever the animal

is hit, provided the skin is pierced, death is practically certain to result within a few hours. These native hunters, chiefly the Wandorobo and Wakamba, have at least the excuse that they only kill for food. Hippo meat is considered a luxury, and the fat, which is found in great quantity, is almost the only fat these people ever know.

To-day in Kenya hippo are found chiefly in the Tana, the Lorian Swamp, Lakes Naivasha, Nakuru and Elmenteita and the northern Guaso Nyiro, and to a lesser extent in the Athi and Mara Rivers. This does not mean that they are not found elsewhere, because, strangely enough, they roam a great deal more than is generally believed. I have seen an old cow hippo with her calf in a very small pond many miles from her regular home, and it is not an uncommon thing to find their tracks a long way from lakes or large rivers. This occurs chiefly during the rains, when they are sure of finding water.

Occasionally it happens that a few have made their home in a small stream in which there were deep pools during normal years. During a particularly dry season, however, this stream may become nearly, if not quite, dry, and the hippo have to move to other quarters, perhaps many miles away. The natural food of these great creatures is chiefly grass, and to secure this they almost invariably go ashore. Whether they ever feed in the water I am not sure, but it is doubtful if they do. Strangely enough, they are found at the mouths of rivers, living to some extent in the salt water.

CHAPTER IX

CAMP ON THE THI KARIVER—PHOTOGRAPHING WATER-BUCK—A LAST VISIT TO DONYA SABUK FOR BUFFALO—RETURN TO NAIROBI

AFTER having spent a week in the Tana camp I decided to move up to where the Thika joins that river, as I wanted to devote a few days to photographing water-buck and other antelope. This is the best place I know for water-buck, and it seemed a pity to leave without securing a really good film of these animals.

Having made camp on the bank of the Thika, I spent the afternoon examining the country for a suitable position for a "blind." While walking along the high bank of the Tana I was struck by the extraordinary amount of game that could be seen on the opposite side. The country was more or less open, with low hills dotted about with thorn bushes and trees, and wherever one looked there were herds of animals—hartebeest, water-buck, impala and zebra. They made a wonderful picture, with the river in the foreground and Kenya showing dimly in the far distance. But unfortunately the animals were out of range for the camera, so the photographs I took were disappointing, and I regretted not being able to cross the river and so get nearer to the game.

In the course of my afternoon's search I found a place which

Camp on the bank of the Thika

was as perfect as anything could be for a "blind." Within a few yards of the river, where the high bank was bordered by a belt of trees and bushes, there was a glade, perhaps twenty acres in extent, and in this ran a tiny stream which widened out into several shallow pools. The ground was lightly covered with grass, bright gold in colour, except near the water, where it was intensely green. At the back of the glade was a strip, a hundred yards or more in width, of thorn trees and wild tamarind; beyond this the rolling plains stretched for many miles. The soft ground near the water was trampled by numerous footprints, chiefly those of water-buck and impala. The place was ideal for my work, and in a short time a "blind" was made under the shade of a large tree, against the trunk of which a bush grew most conveniently; with little effort it was made into a perfect place of concealment. Everything was in its favour. The wind usually follows along the river, so there was little chance of it being anything but favourable. Then the noise of the running water, immediately behind the "blind" and not ten yards away, would prove useful in drowning the sound of the cameras, and combined with these advantages there was the certainty, so far as anything can be certain where animals are concerned, that any creatures coming to drink would approach from in front.

I could scarcely wait till morning, so anxious was I to try the "blind." In the dim, shadowy light of the very early dawn I was on my way, and before the sun rose I was comfortably settled. My hopes ran high, but apparently they were not to be realised;

hour after hour went by, and still there was no sign of any visitors. Perhaps they would not come till towards evening, and I consoled myself with that thought, while I waited patiently and amused myself by picking a few thousand ticks off my legs and arms.

Not until after three o'clock did I see a sign of animal life. Then, among the bushes opposite my hiding-place, I could distinguish some objects moving. A few moments later they proved to be a herd of a dozen or more impala, slowly making their way towards the open, feeding as they came. On coming out into the grassy glade they began playing. Never have I seen anything more interesting than these most graceful of all the antelope, as they raced after one another, bounding several feet into the air in a way peculiar to these finely-built creatures, and generally amusing themselves so naturally, all the while completely unconscious of my presence. There were full-grown does and tiny youngsters and two splendid bucks with their handsome, lyre-shaped horns. What more could I wish, except that they would come closer, for they were about seventy yards or more away. That they were coming to the water I was certain, so that for some time I refrained from using the camera for fear of alarming them. There was no doubt, I thought, that I should soon get a wonderfully beautiful picture of this exquisite scene. Another two or three minutes and then they all stopped and, standing as rigid as statues, stared, not at me, but beyond, farther up the river. What could be the cause of their alarm I

dared not think; I realised but one thing, and that was that I must not delay a second if I was to photograph them. I turned the handle for one, two, three seconds, and then with beautiful, graceful bounds high in the air they vanished.

A moment later the smiling black face of my chief camera bearer appeared; he had come to tell me that he had seen a number of water-buck drinking about half a mile from camp.

What could I say or do? Never have I felt more like murder. The poor fellow, with the best possible intentions, had disobeyed my most definite order that no one was to come near my "blind" until about sunset. The bearers were to come within about five hundred yards of me at half-past four, and then wait until I whistled or called to them. This man's coming had spoilt my chance, the only one I have ever had, of making what might be called a perfect picture of impala. My disappointment was so great that I could not trust myself to say anything except to send the disturber away very much faster than he had come. The two words in my diary sum up the situation very tersely as "rotten luck!" It was. During the rest of that ill-fated afternoon no other animals came near, and at sunset I returned to camp thoroughly dejected.

On the following morning I had just entered the "blind" as the first ray of sun threw a golden glow on the little glade and made it very beautiful. I delayed assembling the cameras for a few minutes to enjoy the effect, when, without warning, a bush buck walked slowly past within twenty yards, and not a

camera was ready! It was my own foolish fault, and I missed a splendid opportunity of making a film of this shy creature. A little later a large herd of impala entered the woods on the farther side of the glade, and stayed there for several hours, but never came out into the open, so there was no chance for using the camera. While they were still there, mere brown shadows among the bushes, four water-buck appeared, three does and a fawn. These did not venture near the water, but I succeeded in making a film of them at fairly long range. The result was not entirely satisfactory. I felt, however, that a chance might yet come, and I determined to spend at least one more day in my hiding-place in the hope that the luck might change for the better.

Unlike the previous days, when the sunshine had been constant, the morning broke with dull, grey clouds covering the sky. But by ten o'clock these gave way to intermittent sunshine, which might prove troublesome for photography should animals come. Shortly before noon several dark figures could be seen in the bushes. These proved to be water-buck, a dozen or more of them, two fine bucks with large, sturdy horns among their number. While I was watching these and wondering whether they would come to drink five more approached from the lower end of the glade, a buck and four does. I turned to look at them, when yet another pair came from the opposite direction. Things began to look promising, and I hastily examined the two cinema cameras to make sure that all was in order.

The herd in the bushes came out to the edge of the clearing, and the three lots stood still for a long time and gazed at each other. At last they were satisfied that only friends were there, and then, slowly, they approached the shallow pools. At last I was to get what I wanted, and my heart beat loudly with excitement as I began to photograph the handsome creatures, some of which were within twenty yards of me. These words fail to give any idea of what I felt. About eighteen of the superb creatures, all within easy range; young and old ones, bucks and does, everything I could wish. I have always regarded the water-buck as one of the most handsome of the African antelope, and as I looked at these, so close that every detail was visible, I felt that it would indeed be difficult to find anything more beautiful than their sturdy build, their great dark eyes, their long, soft coats of brown and grey, their white muzzles and collars, the strange, elliptical, clear-defined, double-crescent pattern on the flanks, and the powerful, ridged horns of the males. Yes, they were really beautiful creatures, both does and bucks, to say nothing of the youngsters, which were perfect miniatures of the old ones.

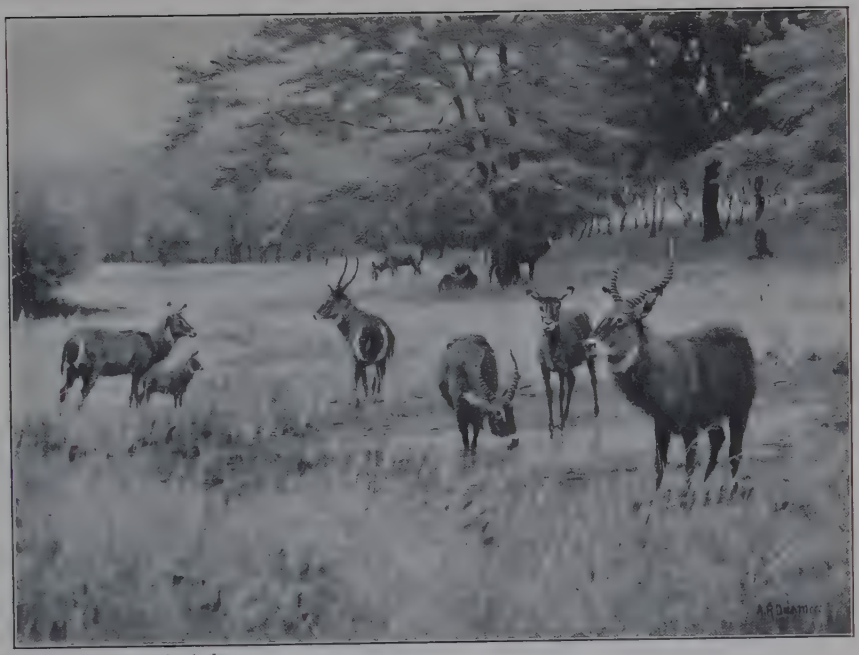
I had ample opportunity to examine them in spite of my feverish activity. Both cameras were being used, one with a long-focus lens for " close up " effects, and the other with a lens of shorter focus for groups. It was a wonderful opportunity, such a one as I had never expected to get. I only wished the light were more constant: one minute the sun shone brightly, then suddenly a dark cloud obscured it and the glade was in

dull shadow. This necessitated repeated change in the exposure, and as every move had to be made with the greatest possible caution it was rather nerve-racking.

Sometimes the animals would come so close that I could not use the cameras, and then I dared not move a muscle. It was all thoroughly thrilling and wonderfully satisfactory. All previous failures were forgotten; the present more than made up for the past, and I was glad I had come to the Tana, even though I had failed to get pictures of the hippo.

For four hours the water-buck remained in or near the glade, and during this time I photographed them in every position and at every range. Nearly a thousand feet of film were exposed, the greatest amount I have ever devoted to a single species of animal; but it seemed wise to make the most of this remarkable opportunity, as I might never have another one to compare with it. To avoid the possibility of failure I varied the exposure from the minimum to the maximum. I used each kind of lens. In fact, I did everything in my power to secure a really satisfactory film record of water-buck, and I may add that the results were up to my greatest expectations. I returned to camp that night filled with the delightful feeling of having succeeded.

Time was now getting short. In eight or nine days I was due in Nairobi, and I had a lot more work to do, besides a march of nearly seventy miles. It was impossible, therefore, to stay any longer in the Tana country, much as I should have liked to have another try for the impala.



From a painting by the Author

Water-buck near the Tana River

On June 15th we started homeward, skirting the northern edge of the Yatta Plains east of the Thika River. The country was open, with short grass and scattered thorn bush, very dry and not particularly interesting. Hartebeest and impala were abundant, but not in places where the camera could be used with advantage. The only photographs I made were of a herd of about one hundred and fifty impala running. I was very anxious to get a film of their wonderful jumps, but unfortunately they were too far away to yield satisfactory results.

On the second day, after having had some difficulty in finding our way, we crossed the Thika by means of a very flimsy, single-wire bridge which some enterprising Englishman had built. I am not at all sure that we were grateful to him, at least I was not, as tight-rope walking has never been one of my accomplishments; it would have been bad enough over shallow water, but over a roaring torrent it was somewhat nerve-racking. Having crossed the Thika, we were on the south-western edge of the Ithanga Hills, not far from where, many years ago, I had had some very interesting experiences with lion and secured the only photographs I have ever made of these elusive beasts. In those days this part of the country was absolutely wild; to-day farms are gradually encroaching on the virgin land. A great change is taking place. Along the trail which we were following we saw no farms during the first day and a half, but we frequently encountered neatly-dressed native boys in smart khaki bringing in messages or going for letters for the white settlers in the more remote parts.

We made camp early in the afternoon after a quite uneventful but hard morning's march through, for the most part, gameless but very beautiful country. The day was sultry and intensely hot, and we were all tired. My tent had scarcely been pitched before I saw a large herd of buffalo, only six or seven hundred yards away. For some time I watched the herd with glasses, and wondered whether I ought not to go after them with the camera. They were out in the open, in broken country, rocky and with fairly high grass and a few scattered bushes. Under ordinary conditions this would have been a splendid opportunity for my work, but two things were against it; the master bull appeared to be in an exceedingly bad temper, and I could see him rushing about and tearing up bushes, which he tossed into the air. I was at a loss to account for this behaviour, until a native, who came to sell us milk and eggs, told me that on the previous day this buffalo had killed a native and injured another, and that several shots had been fired into the ill-tempered beast. The other condition, which was even more serious and discouraging from my point of view, was that the wind kept veering from one direction to another, seldom remaining steady for more than a few minutes. Nothing could have been worse for stalking, as the animals were bound to get our scent, no matter how careful we might be, and I felt perfectly certain that should the big bull discover our presence he would lose no time in coming for us, with results that I did not like to contemplate.

Twice I actually started when the wind seemed to be more

steady, but before I had gone a hundred yards it changed. I sat on a large boulder and tried to make up my mind and, incidentally, to screw up my courage, to tackle the problem of stalking and photographing the herd. Perhaps it was cowardly of me to decide, finally, that the risk was too great. It was, I concluded, an absolute certainty that the consequences would be serious, that any attempt to get within close quarters would result in a killing. It might be the bull who would fall, it might be one or more of my camera bearers, or it might, quite possibly, be myself. So I gave up the idea, and contented myself with sitting still and watching the constant display of fury on the part of the wounded bull.

At one time the whole herd, which was scattered over a large area, came to within three hundred yards of where I sat. The sight was interesting, but I came to the conclusion that distance lent an extraordinary degree of enchantment to the view, and after a time I retired, very ignominiously, to camp. It was the only occasion in my photographic career that I have actually "funked," but there seemed to be no real excuse for deliberately asking to be killed, and I particularly wished to live long enough to see how my water-buck film had turned out.

The next day we reached the Thika bridge after going through some miles of cultivated land, which, though interesting to the farmer, struck me as very commonplace after the natural wild beauty of the uninhabited country. Camp was made on the banks of the Thika, as I was anxious to secure a film of this

beautiful river, with its rushing water and heavily-timbered banks. It is only in such places that we see what is popularly considered to be tropical vegetation, wild bananas with their broad, pale-green leaves, feathery palms, richly-foliaged trees and densely-tangled undergrowth. Such growth convinces the public that the film was really made in the tropics, or as they like to call it, the jungle; while the open veldt, with its great stretches of golden grass, the park-like thorn tree country and the mountain forests, where grey mosses give an idea of a northern climate, do not appeal to the public unless palm trees are shown, as being what they expect to see near the Equator. Such country is to them very disappointing; but, as a matter of fact, Kenya inland is far from being tropical in appearance, except along some of the water-courses, where constant water ensures luxuriant growth of plant life. When you go above six or seven thousand feet the temperature is fairly low in the day and down to freezing at night, even on the Equator, and therefore the vegetation is really that of a temperate climate.

Kenya, away from the coast, with the exception of certain low-lying country, is a gigantic plateau, ranging in height from four to six or seven thousand feet, with mountains rising above that general elevation to still greater heights. Hence the wonderful climate, perhaps the most perfect in the world.

When I had secured what I required in the way of river scenery we moved on the following day towards Donya Sabuk, crossing the Athi River soon after sunrise. While we were going

The Thika River

"Where constant water ensures luxuriant growth of plant life"

across the bridge some monkeys came and posed for me in a most delightful way, showing no sign of fear, even when they saw me assemble the cinema camera. They were accustomed to seeing people, and, finding that they were not molested, they had become remarkably tame.

Camp was made on the slopes of the mountain, as I wanted to have one more try at the buffalo. Perhaps, if I were lucky, I should get what I had always hoped for, a picture of the animals in their wallow. Ever since my first visit to Donya Sabuk the wonderful mountain had always had a strange fascination for me, not only because of the beauty of its forests and glades, but for the remarkably fine view of the surrounding country with its vast plains and mountains, and Kenya is the crowning touch of grandeur. I have yet to see anything to compare with it.

Accompanied by my camera bearers, I made my last climb up the bold slopes on June 19th, and wondered what the day had in store for me. The morning was perfect, clear sunlight with no sign of the usual early mist, but walking was difficult, as the grass was higher than I had ever seen it. All the trails were marked by numerous buffalo tracks, but the ground was very hard, so that evidently there had been no rain for some time, and I was afraid lest the small pool, in which my hopes were centred, should be dry. We approached it with the utmost caution, as there was no knowing where the buffalo might be, and on no account did I wish to alarm them. Leaving the men in a small hollow, I crept ahead to within sight of the wallow; but I dared not

venture near enough to see whether it contained water, as buffalo, many of them, were feeding on the edge of the forest just beyond. This was awkward, as I could not well make a " blind " while they were within sight.

Getting behind some cover, I signalled to the men to come forward along a small gully which afforded adequate concealment. We then crept into a clump of bushes and watched the herd, which was less than three hundred yards away. For some time they remained more or less in view, and then, to my relief, they moved slowly into the forest. Not a moment must be wasted, and in silence I set to work with the men to build a suitable hiding-place which would command a perfect view of the wallow, that was within twenty yards of the bush we had selected when last I had visited the place. The bush, with its tangle of drooping vines, made a perfect " blind." Buffalo had stood beneath its shade, so that the ground was already cleared and little work was necessary to make it ready for the cameras. A large bush-covered mass of rock, from five to twelve feet or more in height, formed one side of the " blind " and gave me a feeling of security, for not only could the men remain there in perfect safety and without fear of being seen, but in the event of a buffalo wishing to make too close an acquaintance with me I could climb up the rock without any unnecessary loss of time. A cord was fastened to the camera, and the other end tied to a convenient branch on the rock. I could, therefore, save not only myself but also the camera.

Scarcely had my arrangements been completed when the buffalo were heard in the forest on one side of us, and at a distance which I judged to be not more than a hundred yards. For a long while we could hear but not see them. At last, however, three or four came into view, about two hundred yards away, feeding slowly along the slope of the hill above the pool. Others followed, until I counted thirty-five. Unfortunately, the clear sunlight of the early morning was now obscured by low clouds which drifted lazily up the mountain-side, often hiding the forest from view, and making long-range photography difficult, if not impossible. I exposed some film on the chance that it might turn out well. For several hours the buffalo were in sight most of the time, but it always happened that when the light was good they were among thick bush, and I could only get glimpses of their dark bodies as they moved about feeding. Not once did any of them come nearer than about a hundred and fifty yards. The wallow was ignored completely, which was most disappointing.

Eventually, in the early afternoon the herd vanished into the forest, and that was the last we saw of them. Of course, *after* they had gone the sun came out and shone clearly for the rest of the day. The only consolation we could find was that it warmed us, and we needed warming, as the misty clouds had chilled us through and through. Seeing no sign of buffalo, I came out of my shelter to enjoy its warmth, and while there, to my great surprise, a small troop of colobus monkeys appeared

among the higher branches of the forest trees. This is, I believe, the only time they have been recorded on Donya Sabuk.

Before starting back I examined the wallow and found that it was almost dry, which of course accounted for the buffalo not coming near it. Evening saw us back at camp after a day which had at times promised well, but which had ended in disappointment.

A number of my porters were developing fever, which is the usual result of being in the Tana district, where mosquitoes are so abundant. Some of these men had to be sent back to Nairobi, while we continued the journey short-handed. My plan was to visit the country near the Stony Athi, about thirty miles away, where I expected to find wildebeest and other antelope, of which I needed photographs. During the first day's march game was scarce: we saw only seven hartebeest, five Grant's gazelle and one "tommy." Water too was very scarce, and we had difficulty in finding a suitable place to stop.

On the following afternoon the last camp of the trip was made not far from Athi River station, and two "blinds" were made near some water-holes on the plains, where there were a fair number of wildebeest, hartebeest, and a few eland. Conditions did not look at all hopeful, but I determined to spend a day there, on the chance of getting something. Knowing from long and bitter experience how clever the hartebeest is as a sentry, I was in my "blind" before the first gleam of daylight, hoping by this precaution to outwit the annoying animal. But

it is a wise man that can succeed in doing that, and evidently I was not a wise man; for when the first pale light of dawn made the great plains faintly visible I saw figures standing here and there, silhouetted against the yellow sky. Something about their appearance made me fear they were my old enemies, the kongoni, and as the light made things clearer my fears were realised. Dotted about on mounds, on ant-hills, or on any place from which a view could be obtained, were about a dozen of the creatures, one in each direction, surrounding my "blind." Had the sharp-eyed antelope seen us making the "blind" on the previous day, or had they unseen, but seeing, watched me, even in the darkness, coming across the flat plain, and finding that I stopped, had decided to establish a regular cordon around me? Whatever the answer the result was the same, and my chance of success was extremely remote.

In the past, many dozens of times, have my most carefully-made plans been brought to nought by hartebeest, and while I admire their remarkable cleverness and infinite patience, I must own to having a deep-rooted dislike for the long-faced, keen-eyed old kongoni.

Throughout the long day hartebeest and wildebeest and Grant's gazelle were within sight of me, but whenever any herd or individual started in my direction a hartebeest would leave his post and gallop in the queer, characteristic, stiff way of its kind towards the other animals and warn them away from the vicinity of my inconspicuous "blind." Large herds of

hartebeest settled themselves for their noonday rest within two hundred yards of me, just too far for satisfactory photographs, and in the end I became utterly disgusted and returned to camp: the last camp I was to have in Kenya.

That night the train took me back to Nairobi, and to the end of my trip. It had been full of thrills, at times intensely interesting and satisfactory, but there had been many sad disappointments. Compared with my first trip in 1908 it was interesting to note the change which had taken place in the game. Considering the very great increase in the number of white settlers that has taken place, especially since the war, the decrease of game is not so noticeable as might have been expected. Of course, certain districts have changed from wild-game country to cultivated farms, and the animals have been killed off to some extent, but most of them have simply moved to other districts. For the greater part the game laws have been wisely made and effectively enforced. In modifying the statement as to the wiseness of the game laws I have referred especially to the quite unnecessary delay in prohibiting all shooting or hunting of game by means of motors, than which there is no more deadly nor more unsportsmanlike method of destruction, not only on account of the ease with which the shooting is done, but also on account of the injury to the animals resulting from the actual chasing. Fortunately, this is now made illegal, and the law, if properly enforced, will do a lot towards protecting game.

I have not heard whether selling game meat is still allowed,

but if so, it should be stopped absolutely. Other countries have found that when game becomes an article of commerce (I am not alluding to the sale of birds that have been bred in order to be shot) it spells practical extermination. Destruction of wild creatures is made so easy in these days by the high-power rifle that laws have to be made far more drastic than in former times, when a man earned what he shot, so long as he " played the game " reasonably well.

One of the most interesting results of game protection is the wonderful increase in the number of giraffe. To-day they have become really common, and very large herds, numbering fifty or even a hundred, may be seen, where but a few years ago herds of more than twenty were uncommon. In 1908 I saw a herd of forty reticulated giraffe near the northern Guaso Nyiro ; such a large herd was then, I believe, very unusual. The killing of these harmless creatures was carried on by natives and white men chiefly for the value of the hide, which is probably tougher than that of any other animal. It is used both for sandals and whips. To-day there is a strong popular feeling against killing giraffe. In fact, it is considered, and very rightly considered, as unsportsmanlike, with the result that the animals are becoming less shy and are rapidly increasing in number. It is well that this should be so, as there is certainly no living creature more beautifully effective in the landscape. They are distinctly graceful, and being so conspicuous, they are pictures in themselves. I remember seeing a herd somewhere below

Sultan Hamud which made a lasting impression on me. I was on the train, and looking with admiration at that superb mountain Kilimanjaro.

The sun had been up perhaps an hour, so that the long shadows gave variety to the colouring of the country; on either side the hills, purple or gold according to whether they were in light or shade, formed a perfect frame to the snow-capped mountain in the far distance. In the foreground, directly in the centre of the picture, and only two or three hundred yards away, a herd of eleven giraffe were moving about, paying scarcely any attention to the train. Anything more beautiful would be difficult to imagine, and I wondered why anyone could bring himself to destroy the magnificent creatures. They offer no prize for the trophy-hunting sportsman, and certainly they offer no sport Why then should they be killed? Beyond injuring telegraph wires, which they do occasionally, they may be considered as harmless.

Next to giraffe, the animal that has increased most noticeably is the buffalo. In some places they have even become a nuisance, not only on account of their dangerous habits, but because they destroy crops and fences. The increase in their number is due not alone to the protection afforded by the game laws, but to their recovery from the effects of rinderpest, which about thirty years ago threatened their complete extermination. Being fairly prolific, and having few enemies save man, the scattered bands of less than half a dozen have now grown to be good-sized herds,

" They are distinctly graceful, and, being so conspicuous, they are pictures in themselves "

numbering in some cases as many as one or two hundred and even more.

The only other animal which seems to have gained in numbers is the eland, as they have been well protected. Of the other antelope hartebeest are, perhaps, scarcely holding their own. Impala appear to be about the same in most districts, but have increased slightly in others, where individual settlers have protected them. The same may be said of the water-buck. Wildebeest have decreased, I think, and so have the Grant's gazelle and "Tommy."

Zebra in the neighbourhood of farms have been killed off to a greater or lesser extent according to the district. They are destructive to fences and to crops, and are thoroughly disliked by farmers. Grévy zebra, owing to the fact that they are not so much in settled areas, are about as numerous as they were fifteen or twenty years ago.

Lion have certainly decreased very noticeably in certain districts. Their boldness in killing cattle has resulted in warfare being waged against them, so that in places where they used to be common they are now scarce. They seem to have changed their habits to some extent, and are becoming more and more nocturnal and far less noisy. In former days it was usual to be serenaded, not only at night, but during the morning and late afternoon, and I have frequently heard them roaring as early as three o'clock, chiefly on dull days. During my last two trips I have only twice heard them in the daytime and very seldom

at night. I might mention here that the common idea that lion are found only in the plains and lower hills is not correct, they also live in the dense forests, such as those of Kenya, above ten or eleven thousand feet elevation. Whether this is a newly-acquired habit, due to the incessant persecution by white men, I do not know. Nor have I been able to discover whether the forest lion find their food in the thick cover, or go out farther afield in the open country for their prey. This I should imagine to be the case, because there is little game living actually in the forest except elephant, buffalo and rhino. If lion have taken to forest country as a means of protection, it is fairly safe to say that it will be many years before they are exterminated, but if they remain in the more open places, and do not change their habits, I feel sure that it will be but a comparatively few years before they will be wiped out. It is not easy to make a law offering protection to an animal which kills human beings, even without provocation. Public opinion is entirely against it, and sees no reason why lion should be preserved for the sportsman at the cost of human life, to say nothing of the cost of cattle.

Whether elephants are decreasing or not it is difficult to form any opinion. Large tuskers certainly appear to be getting more scarce each year. But I doubt whether the others are less abundant than they used to be. That fewer are seen means nothing; but the statement which recently appeared in one of the newspapers, that there are half a million elephants in Kenya and Tanganyika, makes one wonder how the census was taken.

They are wise creatures, and if molested too much seek their homes in the more remote parts of the country. Personally, I believe they will be the last of the larger animals to vanish. Their ready adaptability to different conditions is a great thing in their favour. Extremes of heat and cold do not seem to interfere in any way with their well-being; we find them at very high altitudes where frost is the rule at night, and at the same time they flourish equally well in the hot plains.

The most noticeable decrease among the animals is that of the poor old rhino, notwithstanding what anyone may say to the contrary, and some observers may challenge the statement. During my first visit to Kenya I saw as many as thirteen in sight at one time, and groups of four or five were not uncommon. During my last trip, when I covered a very large area of country and visited many places where the rhino used to abound, I saw thirteen altogether. The ease with which the stupid creatures may be shot must account for this, coupled, of course, with the idea, prevalent with many people, that it is a noteworthy feat to kill the wretched brutes. Unless *very stringent* laws are made for their protection, it is safe to predict their early extermination, except possibly in the forest country, where they still live more or less unmolested. In any event, the sale and export of rhino horns should be strictly prohibited. As long as these command high prices the animals will be shot.

The hippopotamus is another animal that is becoming rapidly scarcer, and will soon be unknown in Kenya. Their last home

outside of Central Africa will be, in all probability, along the Nile, where conditions are favourable for their curious ways of living and where public opinion is against their being killed. The recent prohibiting of all shooting from steamers on the Nile will do a great deal towards saving them. Where there are large areas of suitable swamp-land the hippo will continue to live f - many years to come; there they do no harm, as the country is not suitable for man or farming, and the animals are protected by the inaccessibility of the swamp.

In speaking of the increase or decrease of wild animals it must, of course, be understood that wherever the country is becoming settled the game must become less and less abundant. The vast herds of former days must seek other homes; and here we come to the aspect of the whole case which demands most serious thought, and about which so little is known. The animals selected districts suited to their existence for three principal reasons: sufficient food, constant water supply, healthfulness. If driven away from areas chosen because they combined these three essentials, where will they go? Suitable places are not so common as one might believe; this is proved by the fact that game occurs only in specified and often greatly restricted districts. If then it has to go to places which lack one or more of the requirements, what will be the result? This is a question that is extremely difficult to answer, but from my limited knowledge of nature I am almost inclined to believe that the animals will slowly but surely vanish altogether, owing

to the impossibility of finding suitable country in which to live.

What about the reserves, might be asked? True, they may stem the tide of destruction for a time at least; but will public opinion continue in favour of allowing these vast areas to be given up to wild creatures when man may require them for his own use? I doubt it. Then again, the very reserve may be the innocent cause of destruction. It is well known that animals and birds learn very soon where they are safe, and they flock there. The sanctuary becomes overcrowded, a condition which, especially in tropical countries, is most dangerous. And what happens then? Nature hates a crowd, and in her strange and apparently relentless way steps in. Disease comes. In a tropical country its ravages spread like wild-fire, and it is easy to see what might happen; perhaps a whole area would be completely devastated.

This may sound like the view of a deep-dyed pessimist, but I am far from being that; no pessimist goes in for big-game photography, such work proves one to be, above all things, an optimist, and an optimist may be described as one who hopes for something which he knows he can never obtain, a description which fits the camera hunter. But it is well to face possible facts, and by so doing to guard against trouble; and there is no better way of guarding against it than by taking every reasonable step to avoid it. To do this, so far as the protection of game is concerned, no reservation should be too large, but there should be a number of fair-sized ones completely separated, if possible,

by some natural barrier, across which the animals are not likely to pass. Then if one reserve is visited by disease the others may remain healthy and the animals safe.

I realise, of course, the great difficulties in the way of carrying out these ideas, yet I firmly believe that it is the only way to ensure real protection for the big game of Kenya. But we must learn our lesson from other countries and not wait till it is too late. Once any species decreases below a certain point it is but a short time before it becomes extinct, and when that time comes our only authentic records of the great herds of African game in their native habitat will be the photographs, still or cinema. The museums will have mounted examples of the various species, but though valuable and interesting, they are not moving, not living; they are, in fact, if well mounted, just life-like statues. The Zoos, no longer able to obtain fresh supplies, will gradually lose the larger creatures.

The casualist may say: "Well, what difference does it make, we can get along without wild animals?" Of course we can, but so also can we get along without many of the things we fight for. If we want the animals to continue in their wild state we must fight for them, and in the meantime secure what photographic records we can; secure them and preserve them, not alone for ourselves, but for those who come after us, that they may, at least in picture form, know what Africa was in the days when it was "The Wonderland of Big Game."

CHAPTER X

HINTS ON PHOTOGRAPHING WILD ANIMALS, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE USE OF THE CINEMAGRAPH CAMERA

PURELY in self-defence I am writing these few words on photographing methods and equipment for wild animal work.

I hate writing letters, but it happens very frequently that people who are anxious to take to the camera in place of the rifle (and the number is increasing rapidly) write asking me what they should buy in the way of outfit, and if I would please give them any points that might help, as they have always had such bad luck, and so forth. I am delighted to offer any help that is within my limited power, as the more people who take to this sort of work the better, and the better pictures, still or moving, that are produced the more valuable and interesting is the result. But to write a letter that could be of any real help means a long task, and it usually happens that I have not the time necessary for doing it; so I write a page or two, perhaps in a great hurry, and as likely as not forget the essentials; that, however, passes unnoticed, as my hand-writing is so bad that it can only be understood in places!

Therefore, in mercy to the possible inquirer and to myself,

I am writing this brief chapter, which may be useful. It may also be risky, but I must chance that, and if I lead the reader astray he must not blame me.

Not long ago I met a man in Africa who, had he not been of a very kindly nature, would probably have said, or even done, unkind things to me, because he said I had filled him full of enthusiasm for hunting with the camera, *but* from the way in which I had written on the subject it had appeared so absurdly easy that he had gone out with hope and camera outfit and had not succeeded in making any good photographs ! He had found out, in fact, that it is really difficult to get the sort of pictures one wants. A great deal of experience is necessary to cope with the unexpected situations, and it takes time to learn photography and develop the required patience. I have always avoided laying too much stress on the difficulties, not only because I do not want to discourage people, but because it looks as though one was trying to take to oneself far too much credit for any successes that one may have had. I may say, however, that success seldom comes except as the direct result of hard work.

Photographic equipment is developing so rapidly that these few words of advice may be obsolete in a very short time, so it must be understood that I deal simply with what exists to-day. First of all, let me say that you cannot go out and expect to make good pictures of wild animals with a second-rate outfit. Unless you are prepared to buy suitable cameras you must expect failure, and whether you expect it or not it will come. The only camera

that is worth using is one of the reflex type, because of the necessity of using long-focus lenses in order that the animal will be large enough on the plate or film to be interesting. Long-focus lenses require exact focusing. This cannot be done by guessing; you must *see* what you are doing on the ground glass. With the reflex you can focus up to the very moment of exposure, and obviously this is of the greatest possible benefit. The camera should have a long bellows and a front board of sufficient size to accommodate a large lens. So far as possible I must refrain from giving actual names of makes of cameras, etc., as I do not want to be accused of giving free advertisement to any special make, and besides that it would not be fair to others. Any really good make of reflex camera having the necessary requirements and capable of standing the expected climatic conditions will answer the purpose. Only be sure it is tested thoroughly *before* going on a long trip. Extra mirrors and ground glasses should be carried, and you must know how to replace those that happen to break.

The question of size of picture must depend on your own ideas. Anything smaller than four by five inches is, in my opinion, too small, while anything much larger involves greater weight of camera, etc. A small, sharp picture will enlarge to any reasonable size, and it is better to make a lot of small ones than a few of larger size.

Lenses are of the utmost importance. Using a telephoto means trouble as a rule, for the lenses are difficult to handle

successfully, not alone because of the focusing, which is far from easy, but because of their bulk and weight, and because, unless your camera is unusually steady, there will be a certain amount of vibration and consequent blur of the picture. The increased exposure necessary is also a source of difficulty, as the greater the magnification the longer the required exposure. Yet under certain conditions they are of the greatest possible value, as they enable you to make pictures that otherwise would be impossible. To-day I consider the best lens for animal photography is something of the type of the Teleross or the Dallon. These are fast enough for almost any work, give excellent definition, and require the bellows of the camera to open only about half the focal length of the lens. By this I mean that supposing your camera has a length, when fully extended, of eight inches, you could only use a lens of about five-inch focus if you are going to photograph any object at fairly close range, or of eight inches at infinity. This would mean, let us say, that the object at a given distance is two inches high on your plate. Now, substitute a Dallon, and your object, with the same extension of bellows, is about four inches in height, or with a Teleross nearly six inches. This means that you do not have to approach to within such close distance in order to obtain a good-sized image of your subject. Any dealer will explain this, and demonstrate what I have so briefly said. Unfortunately, these wonderful lenses have not, I believe, been made of more than seventeen-inch focal length, but I hear that the Teleross

is soon to be put on the market with a still longer focus. I have used both of these makes with most satisfactory results, and I only wish that such lenses had been obtainable when I was able to devote more time to big-game hunting with the camera. They are both a credit to British brain and workmanship. For animal work always use as long a focus lens as your camera will carry, as the farther away you are from your object the better will be your chance of getting a good picture without frightening the animal.

Whether to use plates or films is a question which a few years ago would have been quite easy to answer. Then I would have said plates without any hesitation, but to-day things are different. Films have improved so greatly that I would use nothing else if I were going on a trip. I have subjected the more recent Kodak film to severe tests and with most satisfactory results. I take roll films in roll-film adapters; the adapters are necessary because, strangely enough, most of the reflex cameras are fitted primarily for plates. If you use roll-film adapters be sure to have two or more of them, otherwise when you come to the end of one roll, and you are in a hurry to make another exposure, there is the very annoying delay in reloading the adapter, which takes some time to do, especially when you are in a hurry and all your fingers become thumbs. Another reason for providing yourself with more than one adapter is the danger of breakage.

Films are all the better if developed soon after exposure,

particularly in hot countries, and the greater the humidity the more is it advisable to lose no time, if you want clear, bright pictures.

A hint as to exposure may not be amiss. It applies to both still and cinema work in tropical countries, where the sunlight is so powerful that you feel that you must give a very short exposure. Nine-tenths of the photographs that I have seen which were made in Africa were much *under*-exposed, with the result that the shadows are black, and an attempt having been made to force detail into them in development, the high lights have become " clogged " and hard. Err on the side of over, rather than under, exposure. The one you can correct, even if considerably overdone, the other represents a failure.

For flash-light photography the best advice I can give is to communicate with Mr. W. Nesbit, of Short Hills, New Jersey, U.S.A., as lately, after years of experimenting, he has completed a really perfect device. If you cannot get an outfit from him, and prefer to make your own, you can do so ; that is what I had to do, as until recently there was nothing procurable that was fit to use. Electric ignition is better than any other that I have tried, as it is instantaneous and noiseless, and you can make the flash-explosion synchronise with the shutter exposure by means of a magnetic tripping device which is easily made to work with ordinary small dry cells. The flash ignition fuse is of the sort used to fire blasting charges, and is called, if I remember correctly, an electric squib. Unless plenty of powder is used the picture

will be hard and uninteresting, so don't be sparing of the powder. According to the subject I use from half an ounce to one and a half ounces, with a curved tin reflector to throw the light forward. The top of a biscuit tin answers for this ; when discoloured, either clean it or get a new one. Be *very* careful to test your connection *before* the powder is in the pan, and at no time have your face near the powder when the wires are connected. The powder should be in a strong tray of from five to eight inches or more in length. Protect the powder by wrapping it in waxed paper, otherwise the dew will make it cake and burn unevenly. Short-focus lenses give the best results in these circumstances, as the light does not carry very far, and you have to cover a reasonably large field ; you never know exactly the place where the animal will come. For this reason also a small stop must be used to ensure depth of focus. The smaller the stop the larger the charge of powder. Expensive lenses are not necessary. The very best flash-light pictures I have ever obtained of lion were made with a lens which cost ten shillings and sixpence.

This information is very sketchy, because, as I said before, it is better to get a Nesbit outfit, and by so doing save yourself a lot of hard work and worry and disappointment. Perhaps I should say that under no conditions must you have the lens open throughout the night. This seems an unnecessary piece of advice, but I have been asked many times whether it should be done.

One of the most frequent causes of failure in flash-light work

out-doors is condensation on the lens. This can be avoided by rubbing the lens, both front and back, with any of the anti-blur pastes. Many kinds are made ; they should be used sparingly and put on with a soft cloth, not with the fingers.

A film that has been in the camera all night should not be used again, as it is likely to be somewhat cockled, with the result that different parts show an annoying variation in sharpness. Roll off to the next film ; you lose one exposure, but that is better than losing what might otherwise be a good picture.

So much for the outfit for still photographs. Now a few words about the cinema. I will not suggest which make of camera to use, as I have only tried the Newman and Sinclair and the Debrie, both of which have given satisfaction. For long-focus work I prefer the former, when fitted with the special focusing device. Of course, any good make of camera will do the work, but avoid any that are too high. They are very difficult to use in a " blind " and are less likely to be steady. The more compact the better ; and the easier it is to change from one lens to another the less opportunities will be missed. The change should be quick *and* silent. Do not be afraid to make use of long-focus lenses such as the Dallon and Teleross. The best results I have ever obtained were with a lens of seventeen-inch focus. Unless you have a really good focusing view finder you will find it difficult to keep your subject in the picture. Go out in a field where there are cattle, and see what you get with different lenses from a given point. By so doing you will learn a lot as

to which lens to use for different distances when you want to exhibit the animal at a suitable size. Give plenty of exposure, and do not be afraid of stopping down. For animal work several lenses of different focal lengths should be carried, ranging from the regular one with which the camera is equipped to lenses of four, eight, twelve and seventeen-inch focus. By this means, when working from a "blind," you can to a very great extent control the size of your subject. I have photographed giraffe a hundred and fifty yards away with most satisfactory results, every mark on the animal showing with perfect clearness. Then as the creature came nearer and nearer I changed the lens to fit the distance.

A very important part of the outfit is the tripod. Be sure that it is absolutely rigid, that it tilts and "panorams" easily, that it is quickly set up, and that it is strong enough to stand the hard usage that is unavoidable in wild-game photography.

Great care must be taken of the exposed film, and the sooner it is developed the better will be the results. Heat does not cause as much injury as people imagine, unless there is much humidity. If there is, then every possible precaution must be taken. In Kenya (inland), except during the wet season, a film may be kept in the camera and exposures made from time to time, and no deterioration takes place, even after a month or more. During the rainy season this would be risky; but at all times the film must be kept from sudden severe changes of temperature.

Be sure to keep your film boxes clean. The same is true

of the working parts of the camera, particularly of the gate through which the film passes, otherwise scratches will spoil even the best of your pictures. This gate should be wiped every day before using. Beware of sand-storms, even small ones; if one is seen coming in your direction, and they are of common occurrence in many parts of Africa, cover the camera immediately, otherwise the fine dust, being spun round by the whirlwind, will find its way into every part of the machine.

In arranging your outfit the chief points to remember are: portability, accessibility, strength and compactness of units. That is to say, everything connected with a particular camera should be together. It is well to carry a small, light, cinema camera in addition to the regular, full-size ones. They are useful for all sorts of subjects, and owing to their lightness are particularly valuable for stalking game. Their chief disadvantage is that they take only a short film, and therefore have to be reloaded frequently. For cases in which outfits are carried I find the most serviceable are those made of really good quality compressed fibre; these must, however, be kept well varnished. I have had cases in repeated use for eighteen years, during which time they have been subjected to every sort of climate and temperature, varying from zero to one hundred and forty-five degrees, and they are almost as good to-day as they were at first. They are proof against the elements and against destructive insects, are extremely strong, light, and in every way satisfactory *if* of good quality. But guard against inferior material, of which

there is a great deal on the market; it warps and goes to pieces. The only objection I have found to the fibre cases is that they are very noisy. If you are working in a blind, cover them with blankets and stand them on cut grass. Leather cases are, I think, the least serviceable in Africa. In wet weather they get soft, and when the sun strikes them they are likely to become hard and crack; worst of all, white ants delight in eating them. Green, rot-proof canvas is good if on a sound foundation. Be sure that all cases when stored in or near your tent are clear of the ground; sticks or stones placed under them will be found effective. The same is true of wooden boxes. Ants of various species are only too common, and will find their way into everything that is not properly protected; white ants are the worst offenders. They will eat the bottom out of a wooden or leather box in a surprisingly short time.

Do not have any wooden boxes with nailed-on lids. Use either screws or strong iron, strap hinges; these save a lot of trouble. Mark everything carefully with contents and with a number; it saves a lot of confusion.

For carrying lenses when going after animals a good plan is to have a piece of flat, thick leather, with strong canvas partitions sewn on, to carry each lens. This can be made to fit a haversack in which it can be carried most conveniently and with the lenses easily accessible. Duplicate parts of anything that might be broken or lost should be included in the outfit, also a handy repair kit.

Just one more piece of advice regarding outfit. If you are stalking animals, the ordinary full-size cinema camera will be found remarkably heavy, so it is a good plan to have a small camera, which will take, perhaps, seventy-five or a hundred feet of film, with a fairly light tripod; this will enable you to obtain pictures which might otherwise prove impossible. It is also convenient for film work on the march. A portable changing bag for loading film is of the greatest convenience. But the so-called portable "dark room" will be found better for use in camp when much film has to be loaded and packed, or for test development. These devices are about two feet long, fourteen inches wide and, when extended, two and a half feet high; they weigh less than twenty-five pounds. Changing films should, so far as possible, be done at night or in the very early morning, otherwise the heat makes the hands sticky and perspiration drops from one's face, with bad effect on the film.

So much for outfit. Next comes the question of obtaining the photos. The three principal methods of photographing big game are: stalking, working from a "blind" or hiding-place, and flash-light. Of these, by far the most satisfactory is the "blind," as by this method the animals are pictured in easy, natural attitudes, showing neither alarm nor fear. This should be the object of wild animal photography. Frightened creatures are unsatisfactory in pictures.

We will first touch on the difficulties of stalking. Armed with a rifle this is easy. Armed with a hand camera it is more

difficult, owing to the necessity of having to approach to closer range. Armed with a cinema outfit, which may weigh sixty pounds, it is most difficult; not only because the camera and tripod are cumbersome and not easy to drag among bushes or whatever the cover may be, but because, having succeeded in getting within range of the animal, it is very hard to set up the outfit without being seen and heard. I always carry the tripod and camera separately until I am within a fair distance of my subject, then, behind some convenient bush if there is one, or if not, crouching low on the ground, the camera is put on the tripod, and everything is carefully examined to see that it is in order; I then advance with the utmost caution, up wind, of course, holding the outfit before me ready for instant use. It is tiring work, especially if one is stalking moving animals.

Tufts of grass or branches stuck into the tripod will help to hide it and you. If there is but one animal, or even two or three, no move must be made when they are looking up; wait till they are feeding with their heads down, and then move forward without noise and as fast as is possible under the conditions. Sometimes the animals will stare at you for many minutes. Do not move even a finger until their suspicions are allayed. This sounds easy, but when a few thousand flies or other winged pests are making a meal off your neck or face, or ants are crawling over you, keeping still is *not* easy.

Look out for intervening grass or branches. A very small obstruction may spoil the picture. Always carry a light, but

strong, pair of pruning clippers to cut away branches or even grass; this is particularly useful in a "blind." Never break even a small twig, as the noise will frighten your quarry. Keep a keen look-out in every direction, otherwise you may pass some animal which will either see or smell you and give the alarm. Smoking while stalking shows which way the wind is blowing, and the animals do not smell the smoke any farther than they can smell you. It is useless to attempt to stalk any animals when there are others down wind of you; they will be certain to give the alarm. Crépe rubber or rope soles for your boots will enable you to walk even over stones without making any noise, and absolute quiet is essential if you expect to get close to game. If you see that animals are feeding in a given direction, try to find some cover behind which to hide and then wait for them. The chances are they will not come, but if they do you may have a chance of photographing them. Stalking requires great patience and experience, so do not be disappointed if you have numerous failures.

Flash-light work may be done either by setting cameras with automatic releases or by watching from a "blind." The latter is, as a rule, the more satisfactory method, but it requires a great deal of patience. In either case it is necessary to find a place to which the animal will come. A water-hole is the best place, except for lion, hyena and other beasts of prey. For them it is necessary either to find a kill or else use bait. A lion's kill is difficult to find, as it is usually well hidden, but of course it is

far more effective than any other bait. If you kill an animal for bait, do not be discouraged if lion do not come to it the first night; they are more likely to come the second or even the third. If they come on the third night pray that the wind will not blow from it to you! Be sure to cover up the carcass carefully during the daytime, otherwise vultures will eat it.

Having decided on your place and supplied the bait, build a comfortable "blind" with plenty of room in it. Cover the ground with grass and a blanket, so that you can move without making any noise. Put the cameras and flash-lights in position and conceal them by means of grass or branches, and be sure that there is nothing that will shine; also be sure the grass does not blow across the lens.

Two or more cameras can be used with advantage; they should work simultaneously. The releases must be arranged so that no movement is necessary in touching them. The slightest movement may be fatal, not only to the picture, but to yourself, as lion can see at night, and it does not take much to make them come for you. Always have a rifle handy, and arrange the "blind" so that you can see in every direction. Animals do not always come from the direction you expect. A pair of night-glasses will be found useful and relieve the strain of trying to see in the dark. Prism glasses are not very satisfactory at night.

If mosquitoes are at all likely to be troublesome, protect yourself by using some preparation made for that purpose. The best I know is "Parasitox," made by Heppell's laboratories,

and procurable from any of their London shops. It is invaluable and not unpleasant to use. A single mosquito bite may put an end to your trip. A good electric hand torch is most useful. A strong one attached to your hat, so that it throws the light whichever way you look, is also useful. I always turn it on when animals come so that I may be sure what I am getting. Strangely enough, it will arrest the attention of an animal for several seconds, but be ready to fire the flash, as there will be no time to waste. All arrangements must be completed by daylight, and the "blind" entered before dark; it is not well to do any unnecessary walking about at night in Africa. Food and warm clothing and abundance of patience complete the outfit.

It is advisable to have a companion with you, so that you can watch in turns, but choose one who has good hearing (this is *most* important), good night-eyes, and who does not snore!

If you do not care to watch for animals, then try the automatic flash device. This means that your camera is arranged to cover the place to which you have reason to suspect the game will come, whether it be a path, water-hole, salt-lick or bait. The outfit may be put in position at any time during the day, but the flash release should not be attached till just before dark. If a thread is used to trip the release be sure it is black or at least of dark colour; also, it must be well waxed, as otherwise the damp of night will cause it to shrink and perhaps trip the release without it being touched. Avoid having any unnecessarily conspicuous objects visible either to the cameras or to the animals. The

results would be either an ugly picture or, even worse, the non-arrival of the animal. It is well to throw buckets of water over your footprints and tripod to wash away the human scent. If the place selected is a water-hole, the trip thread must be arranged very carefully, otherwise birds may come to drink when it is almost or quite dark and hit the thread, with disastrous results to the prospective picture. If the thread is placed under water frogs or turtles may try to do the tight-rope act, and you will find a beautiful picture of a water-hole minus the animals.

A branch of thorn bush put round the tripod may prevent the camera being knocked down. Don't forget to wipe the lens off with "anti-blur." Lion photography by means of automatic flash-light is most unsatisfactory, chiefly because the first visitor to the kill is usually either a hyena or a jackal, and when you develop the plate and find a lowly jackal instead of a royal lion it is disappointing. I cannot suggest any method of avoiding this. Putting the thread high up does not always answer, as when a hyena is walking he is likely at times to hold his head almost as high as a lion, so it takes very accurate measurements to get the one and avoid the other. The greatest charm about automatic flash work is developing the plate, as you never know what will appear.

Of all forms of animal photography none has so great a chance for pleasure and satisfaction as daytime working from a "blind." The long days of patient waiting when nothing happens are more than repaid by the occasional good day, and then there

is the pleasure of watching, unseen, the various animals and birds. The camera hunter learns more about wild life than the man who only shoots can ever expect to learn.

I have already touched on the advantage of using a " blind " and of the methods (see page 107), so there is not much more to be added. Patience and the most careful attention to details are the essentials. Leave nothing to chance. You may have to set up the cameras and arrange everything day after day without securing a single picture, but don't let that discourage you, and, above all, don't let it make you careless. It is on the very day when you least expect it, when you have not taken every possible precaution, that the game you want will come. When it does come, do not get too excited; go about your work quietly and with the utmost care. Opportunities seldom repeat themselves, so take advantage of every chance.

Avoid, if possible, using all but, say, twenty-five or thirty feet of the film that is in the camera on a given subject, because if you do, as likely as not some wonderful opportunity will occur, and you will have to change film at the critical moment. It is far better to throw away the short piece of film than risk losing a good picture. If you use two cinema cameras (and I strongly recommend doing so) there is not much danger, provided that one of the two contains a fair length of unexposed film.

In putting branches against the outside of the " blind " do not use leaves that fade quickly, because they usually turn the under side up and show glaringly white, besides which dry leaves

rattle. Carefully examine the hiding-place from the animal's point of view, and see that it blends in with the surroundings, that it is not too massive, and that a person inside does not show against the sky; this is of vital importance. See that no piece of metal glistens. I prefer painting all metal work a dull, greenish grey. Avoid walking about more than is absolutely necessary where the animals are expected to come, and once you are in the "blind," which should be entered if possible before daylight, do not leave it until the day's work is done. I prefer being alone in a "blind"; the chance of success is greater, and there is nothing to divert your mind from the one object. Make yourself comfortable, and it will be easier to be patient. Take a book with you if you wish, as reading will help to pass the time when no animals are about, but do not become too much engrossed in what you are reading, if you do you may look up and find some animal looking at you at close quarters. They do not send word when they are coming, and even the keenest of ears will seldom hear the almost imperceptible sound of approaching animals.

Follow all these directions; you will probably disagree with many of them, but they are the result of a fair amount of experience. If you find easier methods, so much the better. But I can assure you of one thing: if you do succeed in making good photographs, still or cinema, of wild animals, you will find the sport everything that sport should be, clean, exciting, exacting and a means of learning much and of giving the greatest

possible satisfaction and pleasure to yourself and to others; and you will be doing a good work in preserving, in picture form, authentic records of the lives of animals, many of which in a comparatively few years will be but a memory.

Keep your methods clean and honest. Don't portray animals wounded and suffering. Don't pass off photographs of captive animals or even of tame animals that are more or less free as *wild* creatures in their natural habitat. To do so is to render valueless even the most beautiful picture. If the animal is captive state the fact honestly. No one will think the worse of you; far from it, they will appreciate the truth, and then when you are fortunate enough to secure an exceptionally fine picture of a wild creature in its own natural habitat the truth will not be questioned.

My great hope is that you may be successful; if you are we shall all be the richer.

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